

OF  
CREDULITY  
AND  
INCRECULITY;

In things

DIVINE & SPIRITUAL:

Wherein, ( among other things )

A true and faithful account is given  
OF THE

PLATONICK PHILOSOPHY,

As it hath reference to Christianity :

As also the business of

Witches and Witchcraft,

Against a late Writer, fully Argued and Disputed.

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By MERICK CASAUBON D. D.  
*and one of the Prebends of Christ-  
Church, Canterbury.*

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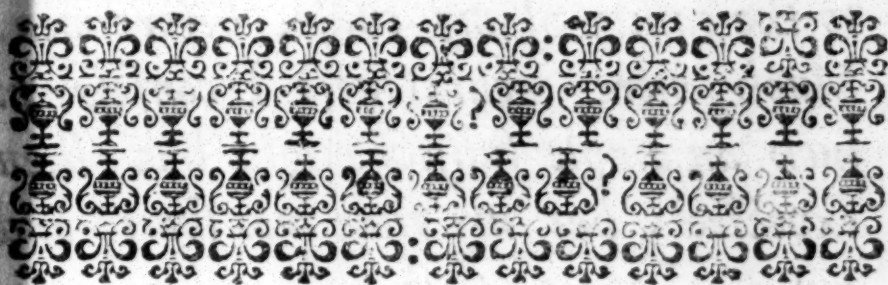
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To the Christian  
**READER.**

**W***Hat I promised in a late Treatise, if God did enable me, I remember well: and though I think, they that know what my condition hath been since, would not condemn me as guilty of any breach of promise, had nothing been performed; yet since it was Gods mercy to afford me some free time; I thought my self bound in duty to him, if not otherwise, to take hold of any opportunity, such as it was to do him service; rather then, (to save my labour) trust*

to the equity of my cause, before men. Much more acurateness I confess in such an ample subject might have been expected; but my time was short, and my comfort is, they that will take the pains to read, will I hope, find somewhat they have not elsewhere, which will give them occasion to glorify God, and to Magnifie his Goodness and Providence: to which effect, the least hint at such a time when Atheisme and Prophaneſs doth ſo much abound, and is ſo daring, as if it daily expected to be eſtabliſhed by Law; may be thought very ſeaſonable. God mend the times; to which I hope, if thou beeſt a true Chriſtian, thou wilt readily, ſay Amen.

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 AND  
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Was bred in that opinion, that a man, though by the advantage of some natural parts, as a good voice, good action, and memory, and a competent knowledge of Holy Scriptures, might make a stout and plausible *Preacher*; yet, without the diligent reading of ancient *Fathers*, and *Ecclesiastical Authors* (not to mention *Schoolmen*, which yet I think are of very good use, if not necessary to compleat a man in this Profession:) never other then a weak *Divine*. This, I am sure, I quickly found, that it is one thing to hear or

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OF  
**CREDULITY**  
 AND  
**INCRECULITY,**  
 In things  
**D I V I N E**  
 AND  
**S P I R I T U A L.**

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## Of Credulity,

read ancient Books, either cited in ordinary Schools, or in Books of Controversies; and another thing, to read the same in the Authors themselves in their own language; especially whether *Greek* or *Latine*, to read Authors by patches and snatches, here and there as they are sought or cited to some particular end; and to read calmly and deliberately the books, (I say not, the whole Authors:) out of which those passages are taken whole and entire; so that, what followeth may be compared with what goeth before, from the beginning to the end, and altogether, well pondered and considered of; without which it is hard and hazardousto determine of the true sense of any particular place. But so it is, that the opinion I had of ancient writers, before I was ripe and ready to make it my business, made me, as opportunity did offer it self, glad to look into them; though not without delight ordinarily; yet not without some trouble and offence sometimes, for want of better knowledge and acquaintance with them. I shall now insist upon one particular onely, of great and general concernment to all Christians, of it self; and to our present occasion and subject, very proper and pertinent as I conceive. It troubled me not a little, when I met with such passages, which seemed to me to import, that a man in point of Religion must *believe* first, and then *understand*, or seek the grounds and reasons (so I understood them) of his belief: whereas it was my belief then, and is still, that a man if either by nature or education

education so happy, as to be able to use and exercise his reasoning faculty with any dexterity, is not bound; especially, in so weighty a business as Religion is, to believe but upon grounds of *reason*: or more expressly, not bound to believe any thing but what he can give a good satisfactory reason of, why he doth believe it: such, I thought was this of *St. Augustin's*: *Re-Et Catholica disciplina Majestate institutum est, ut accedentibus ad Religionem fides persuadeatur ante omnia*; and, *considera quod vocaris fidelis non rationalis: denique, accepto baptismo, hoc dicimus: fidelis factus sum; credo quod nescio*. Such sayings frequent in him and other ancient Fathers, although if rightly understood, very right and warrantable; and, as we shall shew afterwards, not used but upon good consideration: yet it cannot be denied, but they kept many from the Christian faith, as exposing it to the scorn and derision of many, who thought *Reason* the greatest gift of God to Mankind; and therefore, if to be used in any thing, then in the choice of that certainly, which was, and is of greatest concernment unto men. Thus we find *Julian the Apostate*, scoffing and upbraiding the Christians with their usual Motto, *BELIEVE*; as if all their wit and wisdom had consisted in that one word: and of the Heathens in general, it is *St. Augustin's* observation in more then one place, that it was one of their chiefest exceptions against Christianity, *Quod in sola Ratione Credendi consistat*. That the Manicheans also, a most irrational,

but very numerous Sect in those days; did draw most disciples to themselves by their pretence to *Reason*, and deter many from the faith of Christ upon that account of being grounded upon bare faith, or *credulity*, is acknowledged by the same *St. Augustin*, who might very well know, as having been time was, one of them himself; nay, become one of them upon that account as himself doth acknowledge and profess; *De utilitate Cred. c. 1. Quid enim me aliud Cogebat annos fere novem, sprete Religione qua mihi puerulo a parentibus insita erat, homines illos sequi ac diligenter audire; nisi quod nos superstitione terreri, & fidem nobis ante rationem imperari dicerent: se autem nullum premere ad fidem nisi prius excussa & Enodata veritate.* The Manicheans did not receive the Prophets; the Christians pressed their authority: the Manicheans replied (upon their own grounds, as they would have it thought:) *Inertis* ( others *Enervis* ) *Fidei confessionem esse*, &c. that in that, they did acknowledge their faith to be but a drowsish, dull, invalid faith, that could not believe in Christ, without witnessess, and without arguments. *Nempe ipsi vos dicere soletis, &c.* that is, *Are not you they ( Christians ) who use to say, that a man must not enquire curiously, because the Christian faith is ( or, ought to be ) simple and absolute ( that is, not built upon any grounds of reason or evidence. )* So *Faustus Manicheus* argued against *St. Augustine*. ( *August. tom. 6. contra Faust. Manich. l. 12.* ) a pregnant example, or document,



ment, (to observe that by the way, whereof there never was more need:) how prone men are to be led by words and appearances, more than by truth or by reason, though greatest pretenders to Reason; for upon due examination of the matter, it will clearly appear, and might have appeared unto them, who most passionately did use this weapon against Christians, anciently; (had they better considered of it:) that it was a gross mistake, if not wilful and impudent calumny. The mistake was in this: That which was intended of the Articles of the Christian faith, which cannot be proved by reason; (whereof more by and by:) some of them, and most of them, not apprehensible to vulgar capacities; they understood of the grounds of the Christian faith it self, upon which it stands; which are demonstrable to humane reason, if not overswayed by some potent preingagement, into groundless or irrational *incredulity*: that this was their meaning and no other; doth appear by the same ancient Fathers, in whom these words which gave so much offence, that I say not advantage to the simple or malicious, are to be found; doth appear: which made some of them to reply with great indignation, that it was a great and gross calumny. So *Theodoret*, I am sure very roundly: So *St Augustine* also, to the same purpose, in more then one place.

But how came they then to speak as they did, so frequently as we have said? there be two ways saith *St Augustine* ( and it seems it was

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an ordinary supposition or tradition among them; in those days at least : ) to prove the truth of a Religion ; *Reason* and *Authority* : by *Reason* they understood proofs and demonstrations reducible to sense and sight as it were : or immediately fetcht from common Notions and Principles , generally agreed upon by all men, and natural in some sense, to all men as rational Creatures. In this sense, *Authority* being opposed to *Reason* ; because Christians were taught to rely upon *Authority* as their surest ground, it made them, so generally to disclaim *Reason* ; but not so warily perchance, as generally, and innocently ; which made *St Augustine* to recall himself in a place, and thus to qualify the matter. *Autoritas fidem flagitat & rationi preparat hominem : ratio, ad intellectum per cognitionem perducit : quanquam nec auctoritatem ratio penitus deserit, cum consideratur, cui credendum sit, &c.* True it is, that *Divine Authority*, at large, as it may extend to those Oracles, which were in use antiently among heathens, which by heathens are so stiled *Divina Autoritas* ; ( to which also among Authorities or Testimonies, they gave the first place ; ) or extend to pretended Divine visions, and revelations, whereof we have divers examples in ancient Authors , is indeed but a weak proof, and may well be thought to come very short of such Reason as we have spoken of. But *Divine Authority* being understood, ( as it was by Christians of those times : ) of the word of God, or *Scriptures* of the old and new Testament,

ment, which may by good, cleer evidences of reason, and common sense, as manifestly be proved the word of God, as we can prove what we see with our eyes, or handle with our hands, to be this and that, (whereof more in due place :) in this sense, *Divine Authority* is equivalent to Sense and Reason; and could not, as I conceive, be so properly opposed to reason, which made *Nazianzen*, in his answer to *Julians* scoff before spoken of; to appeal to this *Divine Authority* (so stated, as we have done :) as a cleer evidence beyond all arguments and evidences of humane *ratiocination*; and confidently to pronounce them *ἄνθρωποι*, or *ἑμβρολίητες*) *Fools* or *Mad men*, that should make any question of it. There is a Book extant under *St Augustines* name *De fide rerum invisibilium* (to IV.) which though *Belarmine*, *Erasmus*, and some Protestants reject for spurious; yet deserveth well to be read; and I think I could give better reasons to prove it Legitimate, then any they give to prove it spurious: but I wonder where their judgement was who indited it a *Cento*, when the bare reading of it may satisfy any man, that no book in all *St. Augustin* can shew better coherence of matter then this doth. One word perchance some Readers may stick at, and that is, *Diffamare*, for to divulge, or spread the fame of a thing abroad; (being taken in the better sense) which is not ordinary but ordinary to *St Augustine*, as by his Book, *De utilit. cred.* (never questioned, or doubted of;) may appear unto any man



man. There, (*De fide invisib.*) St. *Augustin* after a long discourse of the fulfilling of all the prophecies concerning Christ, (and among others, the miraculous conversion of the world by his Apostles preaching:) hath a passage to this purpose, concluding; *Quis itaque nisi mirabili dementia cecatus, aut mirabili pertinacia durus ac ferreus, nolit habere sacris literis fidem, quæ totius orbis prædicarunt fidem?* and in that sense, those words quoted by more then one out of *Chrysostome*, are very justifiable; *si vis credere manifestis, invisibilibus magis, quam visibilibus oportet credere; licet dictum sit mirabile, verum est.* I quote him as I find him quoted by others: I have not yet met with the words (or remember them at least:) in *Chrysostome*; but the late Martyr-Arch-Bishop in his Learned *Conference*, doth give them much light out of *Thomas Aquinas*: *Alie scientie certitudinem habent ex naturali Lumine rationis humane, quæ decipi potest; hæc autem, ex lumine divine scientie, quæ decipi non potest. qu. 1. art. 5. in c.* so that the resolution of the business doth consist in this; whether the Books of the Old and New Testament, can by sufficient grounds and evidences, certainly and irrefragably (before competent Judges, that is, men actually rational, and not obstinately resolved, and pre-engaged:) be proved *Divine*, or written by men *Divinely* inspired: St. *Augustine* in his Book *De utilitate Credendi*, and elsewhere, besides *Authority*, (in this question commonly opposed to *Reason*, in that sense I have spoken of:) doth add in defence of the  
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Christian faith, diverse other things, as *miracles*; the life and Doctrine of Christ; the sufferings of *Martyrs*; the conversation of *Christian Saints*, and *Holy men*; and the succession of *Bishops in the Apostolique Sees*; and in the *See of Rome* particularly; all which, singly and joyntly are very reducible to rational evidences, and very considerable all, upon that account, for the further evidencing the Christian faith, whereof we shall as occasion shall offer, take so far notice as may serve rationally to conclude them guilty of most irrational *Incredulity*, who notwithstanding such evidences, doubt, or deny the truth of Christian Religion.

But before we proceed to other matter, what made the Christians of those days, in gaining or admitting of *Profelytes* to the Church, so sparingly to insist upon *Reason*, (not in that sense onely pressed by the Heathens, and Manicheans, for Logical Arguments evincing the truth and certainty of the matter in question; but in the sense we have spoken of, for rational proofs and evidences of the *Divine Authority* of the *Scriptures*;) and to press beleieving so much; may be worth some consideration: that it may appear, that difference of times, and not difference of opinions, was the true and onely cause of this difference, or different way of proceeding. We say then, that the multitude of men flowing, or flocking to the Church, in all parts, to be received into it, of their own accord as it were; or to speak more properly, by a *Divine instinct*, as it had been foretold  
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by Christ, that it should happen, and all things well considered, may be reckoned for one of the greatest miracles, if not absolutely the greatest, since the Creation of the world, was the cause that they did decline much reasoning, which, even to prove the truth, or *Divine Authority* of the Scriptures, would have been a work that required a considerable time; and by reason of the incapacity of many, if not most, rather needless then necessary, that I say not impossible; and would have retarded, or put back the conversion of many. And this is that *simplicitas credendi*, by a special providence, or indulgence of God available to salvation in all ages of the world upon such occasions, either of incapacity or otherwise; which the ancient Fathers often speak of, and commend. *In Catholica enim Ecclesia, ut omittam sincerissimam sapientiam, ad cujus cognitionem pauci spirituales in hac vita perveniunt, ut eam, ex minima quidem parte, quia homines sunt, sed sine dubitatione cognoscant; ceteram quippe turbam non intelligendi vivacitas, sed credendi simplicitas tutissimam facit.* In his Books *De utilitate Credendi*, before mentioned, he doth insist upon two motives or inducements God had provided for the simpler sort, (whom he doth stile *stultos*, but not as a reproach; intending *simple* or *illiterate* onely,) as fittest for them (In those primitive times, we must understand;) *Miracles* and *Multitudes*, which he doth refer (these also) to a kind of *Authority*, in opposition to *Reason*. To this purpose *Tho. Aquinas 2. 2<sup>a</sup>. Qu. 2. art. 4. c. verry*



ry well and fully: *Ut citius & firminus, &c.* To the end that men with more speed and assurance (the simpler sort) might attain the knowledge of God, it was necessary that men should receive by faith, not those things onely which are above natural reason; but even those that might be found out by the light of nature; whereof more in the conclusion it self.

Now that this was the course established by Christ himself for those times, that men should first be called upon to *beleeve*; and then *taught*: that *Authority* first should be proposed unto them, and then *Reason*; (so far as capable of it :) is the constant assertion of the same Fathers, grounded upon several places of Scripture. *St. Augustine* after some reasons given: *dubitabis tu Dioscore, &c.* Can you, *Dioscorus*, or any man that is judicious, think any other course to bring men to the embracing of truth, could be more effectual, then that he who was miraculously and ineffably conceived of truth it self, and representing the person of the true God upon earth; teaching men Righteous things, and doing Heavenly things (that is, *Miracles*) should perswade men to beleeve to their salvation, what they had not yet judgement enough to apprehend? But then adds he; *Sed ille fidei Imperator Clementissimus*; that is, (though not easie to be translated, the words are so proper and elegant :) but the same meek Commander of faith, by the numerous gatherings of Peoples and Nations, (that is, *multitudes*, before) hath with the Fort of Authority, as it were secured his Church; and by some,  
though

though not so many in number, but truly (piè) Learned and Spiritual, hath fenced it with manifold works (apparatibus) of unconquerable reason. And so, *De utilitate Credendi: si autem Christo etiam credendum negant, nisi indubitata ratio reddita fuerit; Christiani non sunt. Nam id adversus nos Pagani quidem dicant, stulte quidem, sed non sibi adversi, nec repugnantes. Hos vero quis ferat ad Christum se pertinere profiteri, qui nisi apertissimam rationem stultis de Deo protulerint, nihil credendum esse contendunt? At ipsi videntur (quantum illa, cui & ipsi credunt, docet Historia:)* nihil prius neque fortius quam credi sibi voluisse: cum illi nondum essent idonei, cum quibus eis res esset ad Divina percipienda secreta. Quid enim aliud agunt, tanta & tam multa miracula, ipso etiam dicente, illa fieri non ob aliud; nisi ut sibi crederetur? Faith then, or to believe, was the thing generally stood upon, or required; and with those circumstances, proper to those times; Faith might well goe for Reason: yet Faith, or, to Believe in general, or absolutely; though it may by special providence be the means of salvation; it can be no true ground of Religion; and any Religion may pretend to it, as it imports a strong confidence or presumption: but upon due consideration it will appear, that the Christian Religion is grounded upon Reason, and no other Religion, but the Christian is. Reason and Truth in this question are but one; and St Augustine doth yield to the Maniche's, if they can make it appear, that either is on their side, he will

will think himself obliged to be on their side too.

But though we maintain that the Christian Religion is grounded upon, and maintainable by *Reason*: or to express our selves more clearly, that our Faith is grounded upon the *Scriptures*, as Divine, which to be so, may be proved by sound and solid reason; and so upon that account, grounded upon *Reason*: yet it is our belief, and is the constant opinion both of Romanists and Protestants, that no man, though convicted in his understanding by reason, that the *Scriptures* are Divine; can be so fully settled in his heart in that belief, as to become a true Convert thereupon, without the special Grace and Mercy of God, or to speak more distinctly, without the benefit of an *infused Faith*: so that *Reason* (and that is the gift of God too, that a man is naturally capable of so much reason, and hath the Will and opportunity to enquire into it:) before it can be available to Conversion or Salvation, doth become *Faith*, and the gift of *Grace*.

Now to prove the Divine Authority of the *Scriptures* by Reasons and Evidences sufficient to convince any sober understanding man, free from passion or interest, (for, that interest and passion, or much vice, are able to corrupt a mans Reason, and deprive him of the benefit of it, though otherwise very rational, is not *Aristotles* onely, but the acknowledgment of



all Philosophers, that are of any account:) what arguments may be used, will be a long business, and hath been done by so many both ancient and late; (of all that have written of the truth of Christian Religion, and some others, under some other Title;) so fully and solidly, that I think there is no need of new supplies. However to prove them guilty of greatest *incredulity*, that will not or cannot be perswaded that it is so, though they have or profess to have with care and diligence perused the best writings of that argument; where some new matter shall offer it self, as probably some may before we have done; I shall not avoid it.

But instead of what I conceive is not so needful, because done by so many already; or not till we have a better place for it; I shall here take into consideration, (which will not need much discourse, and may be thought as proper and pertinent:) whether the mysteries of the Christian faith (the mysteries themselves I mean, laying aside *Divine Authority*;) may be so demonstrated by reason, that they, (rational and judicious otherwise;) who cannot be perswaded to yield assent, may justly be charged of *incredulity*. A question that may seem the more strange in these times, when there are so many, who neither by the consent of all nations, nor of all ages of the world, (some few excepted, who for the most part shew little use of reason in their lives or Government)

vernment) and the determination of wisest Philosophers; (not to speak of *St. Pauls* judgement, that τὰ ἀβέβαια τῶν νομῶν, &c. which would be of no weight to such miscreants) can be perswaded that there is a God, Creator of the world, &c. which rather then beleave, they will believe either with *Epicurus* (then which nothing can be more sottish, and doth argue, if ever any thing did, right dementation, and made *St Augustine* say, *Pudet me generis humani, cujus aures hac ferre potuerunt* : ) that the world was made by a fortuit concourse of Atomes, or with others, more then half Epicureans, that God endowing the Atomes with the power of Motion onely, it was as much as needed to bring forth such a world, without his farther care or intermedling; which opinion, though it presupposeth a God, yet it doth much abridge and obscure his Providence; which was cursed *Epicurus* his main design.

But to the question proposed, though it may seem to some strange, or needless; yet certain it is, that some ancient Fathers of best Worth and Fame, have some passages, which seem to import so much, that the greatest mysteries of the Christian faith may be proved by Reason. *Sixtus Senensis* doth observe, that it was one of *St Chrysostomes* proper tenets, that the Divinity of Christ might be proved against all opposers, *Clarissime & fortissime, sine ullis Divinarum Scripturarum testimoniis* : and *St. Augustine*, besides the *vestigia Trinitatis*, which in

all, or most creatures he maintains to be observable, hath many arguments taken from things created and visible, to prove the *uncreated Eternal Trinity*. *Raimundus de Sabanda*, who lived about the year of the Lord 1430. hath set out a Book, entituled *Theologia naturalis*; by which he doth undertake to prove all the mysteries of our faith by plain reason. I had once the Book, but do not remember that I found much in him to satisfy me or any sober man, I thought. Yet Learned *Grotius*, *De veritate, &c.* mentions him as a considerable man, which I wonder at; especially when I read his Prefaces in *Gesner's Bibliotheca*; wherein he seems to me to speak more like a mad man than a man of any judgement: I have also seen a French writer, one *Fr. Leon*, a man by the prefixed attestations, of great esteem, where better known, who in a Book entituled by him *L'Oeconomie de la Religion Chrestienne*, doth seem to undertake some such thing, but not with the like confidence. These I mention, who did offer themselves to my remembrance at this time. I make no question but more might be named, who did attempt the same. But I do not desire to be long upon this point: I conclude with the Prince of Schoolmen, and a great Master of natural Reason, *Tho. Aquinas*; that such Mysteries as the *Trinity*, and the like; *per naturalem rationem cognosci non possunt*; and that for any man to attempt it, doth expose Christian Religion to the scorn and derision of Infidels; and doth rather



ther confirm them in their infidelity, whilst they think these be the best grounds we have to trust to, or to build our faith upon. Besides, that it is not for the honour and Dignity of our Faith, that what is proposed to us in the Scripture, as an incomprehensible Mystery; should be within the scanning of natural reason. So that *Angelick* Doctor, like himself, solidly and profoundly. Yet so far he doth allow the use of natural reason in greatest Mysteries, that by it may be proved, they are not impossible, or imply contradiction. This, of those grand Mysteries of the Christian Faith; *the Incarnation of Christ*, the Son of God, the Second person of the Trinity; and the *Trinity* it self; One God, and Three persons.

As for some other Articles of the Faith, as namely, *The Resurrection of the dead*, there is so much to be said, not only for the possibility of it, but also probability, as I think they may be justly accounted very incredulous, who beleeving that there is a God, a just omnipotent God; cannot be perswaded that the dead shall arise, both just and unjust, and receive according to what they have believed or done, in their life time; which made the Apostle, who of other mysteries, as the *Incarnation, &c.* speaks with greatest astonishment, as altogether incomprehensible: yet when he Treats of the Resurrection of the Dead, doth not stick to upbraid such unbelievers who stuck at the possibility of it, by the name of *Fools; thou Fool,*

&c. not without reason certainly. For besides that divers heathens, long before Christianisme, Philosophers and others did beleieve, or profess to beleieve the Resurrection of the Dead; and though since Christ, yet one, whose testimony is as considerable as any's before Christ, Philosopher, or other; *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus* the *Roman* Emperour, did think it very probable; so far he was, though a great Philosopher, from sticking at the possibility; and that some of *Aristotles* most approved Commentators, gather much for the probability of it, out of *Aristotles* very Text, and Doctrine; besides all this, I find that *Plutarch* (a very worthy man indeed, in all respects; though I should hardly say of him, as *Gassendus* doth, that *no Age bath born the like*: ) his chiefest objection (in the life of *Romulus*) is, because he thought it impossible that *Earth* should be mixed with *Heaven*; which if he had not known before, he might have Learned from *St Paul*, when he saith, that *Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God* ( *1 Cor. 15. 50.* ) *neither doth corruption inherit incorruption*: and when he doth so accurately distinguish between *bodies Celestial* and *bodies Terrestrial*, verse 40. between a *Natural* and *Spiritual body*, ver. 44. This I confess I look upon from such a judicious, and so great a Philosopher, as a very considerable testimony, though delivered by him as an objection, rather than a testimony: and though he mention not the *Resurrection* expressly; yet what his objection aimed at, and against

against whom chiefly, the judicious Reader will easily guess: as for that *Plutarch* doth add, that the way of the soul to return to Heaven from whence it came, after death, is to loosen or separate it self from the body, while they are together, as much as it can, and to keep it self distinct from it, and fleshless as it were, by following after Purity and Sanctity; this, had not his Philosophy taught him, he might have learned from Christ, *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*: and from his Apostle, that *without Holiness no man shall see the Lord*; Heb. 12. 14. and by that excellent, as I may say, (setting Divine inspiration aside) most Philosophical passage, that, *whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap; for he that soweth to the flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption: but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.* (Gal. 6. v. 7, 8. All which things considered, I think, I may conclude, that he, who notwithstanding all this, that is, who hath some knowledge of natures wonders, daily to be seen, but not without a speculative or philosophical Eye, in the course of nature and properties of natural things; (for nature it is that *St. Paul* did appeal to, *thou fool, that which thou sowest, &c.*) and doth beleieve that there is a God, an omnipotent just God, &c. and yet (I press not the infalibility of Divine Scriptures) upon this account will not grant the resurrection of the Dead, if not certain and unquestionable, yet very possible and probable, that he may certainly



certainly enough be accounted guilty of great incredulity in things Divine.

But because I have named upon this occasion *M. Aurelius Antoninus* the Romane Emperour, a man for the integrity of his life; (that I say not *Sanctity*, though I should not be the first that had used that word of him :) his singular Learning so much admired by all men of his times; his great Power, large Empire, Noble and Heroick Acts at home and abroad; Civil and Martial; for these reasons, I say, as considerable a man, as any (under the authority of the Sacred) can be; I desire that I may give a farther account of his opinion, as expressed by him in that admirable book of his, which I have had the honour and happiness to set out, first in *English* then in *Greek*, as it was written by him, with a *Latine* Translation. A very Learned man, who some ten years after my *Greek* and *Latine* Edition (though intended by him, it seems, many years before :) did set it out with a large Comment, would not have *Antoninus* by those words by me intended, to intend the Resurrection, as we understand it; that is, of the body, to be reunited to the same soul or Spirit, into the same person it was before; but of the resurrection of the soul, as it were after some kind of extinction or cessation, whether for a longer, or a shorter time: for as for the body, *Antoninus*, saith he, as a Stoick did not, could not mind that, what became of it after death, as no part of man properly

properly according to their tenets: *Verum de mente sola satagit Marcus; de corpore nihil sollicitus, quod nec se nec suum, nec sui quicquam, a quoquam censeretur volebant Stoici*: So he; as for the objection of his being a Stoick, it might really and truly be proved, that he was not so addicted to that Sect, but that he left himself a liberty to embrace what ever he liked better, either in matter of opinion or action in any other, as from his own Writings may easily be proved; neither do ancient Writers give any other account of him. But yet, what if a Stoick? of all ancient Philosophers, I do not know any that have said so much of the Resurrection as professed Stoicks. *Resurrectionem Stoici non plene quidem, aut certa fide, neque firmis satis rationibus persuasi, sed tamen utcumque crediderunt, aut verius somniarunt*, are the words of one in his Comments on *Persius*, who was well able, though I say it, to give a good account. But how doth it appear, some would gladly know perchance: I will not make use for proof of those words of *Seneca*: *Et mors quam pertimescimus & recusamus intermit tit vitam, non eripit: Veniet iterum qui nos in lucem reponat dies*; here is a resurrection indeed, but not such as we maintain, as may appear by the following words; *quam multi recusarent, nisi oblitos reduceret*; by which it doth appear that he intended it of the return of the Soul to a Body, but not to the same body; which they called *μετεμψύχωσις*, first devised or published at least, by *Pythagoras*:

goras: though by some words in the same *Seneca*, (*De beneficiis*: vii. 21.) it may be thought that some did understand it of the same body also: yet *St. Augustine* not only in his 22 *De civitate Dei*. c. 28. but also in his Sermons *De tempore*, *Serm.* 143. doth tell us of them, who asserted it of the same body also; but wherein agreeably, or not agreeably to the Christian Faith, he Learnedly, as one who was very well acquainted with their opinions, sheweth. But he doth not tell us they were Stoicks; No, but was not *Chrysippus* a Stoick, an arrant Stoick, whose words out of his Treatise of *Providence*, are produced by *Lactantius*, well deserving to be preserved: τῆς δὲ ἕως ἔχοντος, δὴλον ὅς ἐστιν ἀδύνατον ἀπιστον, *A thing incredible*, (*S. Paul's* word to the same purpose, *Acts* 26. 8.) καὶ ἡμᾶς μετὰ τὸ τελευτῆσαι, πάλιν ἀειδόντων τινῶν ἐπιλημμένων χεῖρας, εἰς ὃ νῦν ἐσμὲν, κτλῆσθαι (or, as other Editions, ἀποκαταστήσθαι) ἡμᾶς. Such a kind of Resurrection also *Epicurus* may be thought to have believed, if *St. Jerome* be in the right, when he saith (if his words be not vitiated) *Nec putemus signa atque prodigia, & multa quæ arbitrio Dei in mundo fiunt, in prioribus seculis esse jam facta, & locum invenire Epicurum, qui asserit per innumerabiles periodos, eadem, & iisdem in locis, & per eosdem fieri. Alioquin, & Judas saepe prodidit, &c.* Could *Epicurus* think so? or did *St. Jerome* intend (and write so perchance:) the same man *Chrysippus* as *Lactantius* did? it is very probable. The words certainly, whose soever they are, import a

παλιγγενεσία,



παλιγγενεσίαν, as well of Bodys as of Souls; and that by Fire (ἐκπύρωσιν,) as the Stoick taught which hath somewhat more of what we beleeve. But let us hear *Antoninus* himself. Πῶς ποτε πάντα καλῶς, &c. How comes it to pass saith, he; that the Gods having ordered all other things so well, and so lovingly, should be over-seen in this one only thing; that whereas there have been some very good men that have made covenants as it were with God, and by many Holy actions, and outward services, contracted a kind of familiarity with him; that these men when once they are dead, should never be restored to life, but be extinct for ever; μηκέτι αὐτοὶ γίνεσθαι: That he doth intend it of the body, (for the soul, if not immortal, yet, that it remained for a long time after death, they beleeved:) not of the body alone, but of body and soul to be joyned again into one and the same person; may appear, because he saith, ὡςπερὶ δὲν ἀπὸς ἀποθανόντος, as soon as ever dead, μηκέτι αὐτοὶ γίνεσθαι, not to be restored to life again; to wit, the man, consisting, (though not a precise Stoick in that) of body and soul for ever. That he intended it of such a Resurrection, may be farther confirmed by another passage of his Book. 7. 3. which begins (as I distinguish, or divide the Paragraphs, and the coherence doth require) ἀναβιώναι σοι ἐξες, it is in thy power to live again. By which words briefly proposing to himself, what it is that men ordinarily most desire, and wish to themselves, as their greatest happiness, if it could be; and that is, ἀναβιώναι, to live again, which

which therefore is used proverbially sometimes, of any kind of happiness, or good luck, the greatest that can be wished (so conceited at least :) or can befall mortal man; as when the Comick saith, *Dii immortales, iterum natus videor*, ( *iterum nasci*, for ἀντι γίνεσθαι, or ἀναβιβάζειν, well expressed. ) or *Horace, pretium vita altera sordet*: and so ζῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν, life from the dead, Rom. 11. 15. περιμακῶς, (saith Theophylact, there :) proverbially for infinite goods, or endless: (ἀπὶ ἀπειροῦ ἀγαθῶν!) But how in our power, or in any mans power, to live again, saith *Antoninus*? there he shews excellently well, and very suitable to what wise *Solomon* doth teach in *Ecclesiastes*. By this then doth appear that *Antoninus* had a true and real resurrection in his thoughts; of the body, I mean (as before said) to be reunited to the same soul: and that ἀντι γίνεσθαι, is here to revive, by rising from the dead, or a dead estate. But by the way, reading very lately *Gregory Nazianzen* his 42 Sermon or Oration, εἰς πάρα; I found there, πῶς ἔν ἀναπλασθῆναι, καὶ πὶ γίνεσθαι. So in the *Paris Edition*, p. 684; and so in that of *Aldus* in 8°. p. 210. He had said before, ἔδει πάλιν ἀνακληθῆναι, καὶ πρὸς τὸ ἀρχαῖον ἐπαναχθῆναι. I will be confident of nothing (so dangerous is confidence in this kind of Learning :) but except we read it πρὸς τὸ ἔν ἀναπλασθῆναι καὶ ἀντιγινώσκον τὸ μὲν ὁρῶδες (ἔδει, scil. which went before) &c. I can make no right construction or sense of it: but this obiter only. Now I will produce the whole passage of *Antoninus* concerning this matter, that

that the Reader may judge the better, and withall, give it some farther light, whereof good use may be made. *How comes it to pass, &c.* as before it follows; *but this thou mayst be sure of, that this, if it be so indeed, would never have been so ordered by the Gods, had it been fit otherwise; for certainly it was possible, had it been more just so, and had it been according to nature; the nature of the Universe would easily have born it. But now because it is not so, (if so be, that it be not so indeed:)* be therefore confident, that it was not fit it should be so: for thou seest thy self, that now seeking after this matter, how freely thou dost argue and contest with God: but were not the Gods both just and good in the highest degree, thou durst not thus reason with them. Now, if just and good; it could not be that in the Creation of the world, they should either unjustly or unreasonably oversee any thing. First, what *Antoninus* doth here, is no more then what Holy Job did before him, *ch. 14. 7.* bewailing the condition of man, to whom it was not given to revive or shoot up again, as unto Trees; the *Pine* tree (as is observed by *Herodotus*, from whence the Proverb, *πινυ ὄντιον ἐκτρίβειν*, to cut off as a Pine-tree for utter extirpation;) onely excepted. Secondly, it is well worth our observation, how warily and tenderly he doth proceed, lest he might be thought to charge God foolishly, and his Providence in the world, and thereby give occasion to wicked men to murmur, or to blaspheme, or perchance offend God himself by his too great liberty:



berty : whether therefore any such thing as a  
 Resurrection, or not ; yet the justice and good-  
 ness of God he maintaineth however upon this  
 ground ; that man is too weak to penetrate  
 into the reason of all that God doth, or de-  
 crees. For the same reason, the Divine Psalmist  
 purposing to reason, and in a manner expostu-  
 late with God about the prosperity of wicked  
 men in this world, &c. he beginneth with a  
 protestation of his Beleef, that God is good  
 and righteous. *TRULY* (a very emphatical  
 word in this place :) *God is good to Israel, even  
 to such who are of a clean heart.* Psal. 73. 1. and so  
 the Prophet *Jeremy*, upon the same occasion,  
 but somewhat more boldly ; he at first begins  
 with a submissive protestation of his beleef,  
*Righteous art thou O God when I plead with thee*  
*( Antoninus comes very near when he saith, how*  
*freely thou dost argue and contest with God, but*  
*were not the Gods both just and good, &c. )* yet let  
*me talk with thee of thy judgements ; wherefore*  
*doth the way of the wicked prosper, &c.* Jer. 12. 1.  
 and so the Prophet *Habakkuk* ; *Art thou not*  
*from everlasting, O God, &c. thou art of purer*  
*eyes then to behold evil, &c. wherefore, &c.* as I  
 have had occasion elsewhere more largely to in-  
 sist upon ; where also this passage of *Antoninus*  
 is mentioned. And so again, when *Antoni-*  
*nus* doth describe, or set out Holy men by  
 these marks, or properties, that *they have made*  
*many covenants as it were with God, and by ma-*  
*ny Holy actions, and outward services, contract-*  
*ed a kind of familiarity with him,* who would  
 not

not think, had he known the Scriptures, but that he alluded to the words of *David*, (whereby the general resurrection is intended, as is the opinion of some interpreters, who make that the argument of the *Psalms*, *Christum homines in suo ultimo judicio, &c.*) gather my Saints together unto me, those that have made a Covenant with me by Sacrifice. For a farther confirmation of *Antoninus* his meaning, I shall add, that there was a tradition among ancient Heathens, that some men ὡς τοσούτ' ἀσέφιλοι, as being extraordinarily beloved of God, (which comes very near to *Antoninus* his expression) did ἀναβιώναι or ἀναζήνοισι, as there expounded) that is live again (by a resurrection certainly:) as *Snidas* doth record, in the word ἀναβιώναι. I have said enough I hope to vindicate my interpretation of *Antoninus* his words concerning that matter; more then I should have said (not doubting, but that wheresoever that Learned man and I, do dissent concerning the right meaning, the judicious and impartial Reader will take some time to consider, and do me the right, to peruse my *Latine* Notes and Translation so long after, as well as the *English*;) but that I reckon any testimony from such a man as *Antoninus* was; well to deserve exactest consideration. But of all Heathens (if a Heathen,) none hath written of the Resurrection more plainly, then the Author of that excellent Poem, that goes commonly under the name of *Phocylides*; but concerning the Author who he was, of what Profession, and

and when he lived; though some very Learned, with care and diligence have searched into it, yet there remaineth, as I conceive, much more to be said of it, then I can think fit for this place.

Now because the assurance of the *Scriptures* being *the Word of God*, is the main foundation of Christianity, which sufficiently proved, doth make all men, who are of capacity, and want not opportunity, (by want of opportunity, I do not mean *leisure*: for they deserve to perish, that will not make this the main business of their lives, if they know of it: but, *want of means*, as they that live in remote parts from Christianity, and where Bibles are not known or to be had, and the like:) unexcusable as guilty of greatest *incredulity*: though so much hath been written already by ancient Fathers and Authors, as *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Eusebius* and others; and so much by late Authors, both Romanists and Protestants, as I think may satisfy any rational man not overswayed with much prejudice or preingagement; yet the matter being of such consequence as it is; I shall propose somewhat to the consideration of the Reader, which, though not new, as to the substance, yet not so fully set out by any to me known, as I may perchance do it; and the rather I may adventure upon it, because of late I see some have endeavoured contrary to the opinion, as themselves acknowledge, of the most Learned, this late age hath born, to slight



or invalidate all or the most part, at least, of such proofs and evidences, as meer fancies and groundless conceits; which, if generally believed; and received (as in these times, so prone to *Atheisme*, what will not, that makes for it?) the cause of Christianity, with many that have been in all ages much taken with such proofs and evidences, may suffer not a little. It is *St. Augustines* observation in one place, *Quem non movent ad credendum tantus ab initio ipse rerum gestarum ordo.* &c. It is a very good observation as he doth set it out there. I think I may with as much reason, with some alteration of the words, *Quem non moveat*, &c. When it shall appear how the most substantial passages, and histories of the Scriptures from the first Creation of the world, by a continued tradition from the first and antientest of times; some with more, but many with very little alteration; among all people and nations of the world, who have left unto posterity any records extant in the time of Christ his conversing among men; and since of their traditions and opinions, which of necessity, to any judicious indifferent Reader, must be supposed to proceed either from the *Scriptures*, or from antienter traditions, even from the first acting or happening of those things; who can be so much an infidel that will not be much moved and provoked to acknowledge the Divine authority and truth of the *Scriptures*? especially, when it shall appear, that those things, so convey'd to posterity, are things of that nature, which upon due con-

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sideration, will be found to be very remote from the course of ordinary chances and accidents in the world; such as may with any probability be supposed to have happened more than once, or in more places than one.

To make this evident, I shall not trouble my self to consult any that anciently, or more lately, largely and learnedly have Treated of this Subject. What mine own observation, though I make no question, but we may concur in some things; hath suggested unto me, shall serve my turn, not without some confidence, (though I shall not be long upon it;) that this *Specimen*, or short essay, will *salivam movere*, to many, and provoke them notwithstanding this late defamation endeavoured by some against such enquiries; to look farther into those, who have written of this Subject more largely, and have acquitted themselves (which I cannot say of all;) Learnedly and Judiciously. I shall go to the very beginning of things, and confine my self to the first Chapters of *Genesis*.

To begin then with the *Creation*; I know that at the very naming of *Ovid*, many will be ready to cry out, that every School-boy could have said as much: it may be so, yet the wisest men, if they consider how exactly almost, as to the substance, it is set out even as far as the deluge, according to the Scripture; it may give them just occasion to consider and admire, whence  
that

that Heathen Poet should have it : out of the writings of ancientest Poets and Philosophers certainly ; no man will question that I think , and if any should, it might easily be proved. And is it not strange, that the memory of so ancient a thing , then which the world hath nothing more ancient, should for so many ages be preserved so entire ? could it be so, without some providence ? since that, this first beginning of things, as delivered by antientest Heathens, being found so conformable to what the Scripture teacheth of it ; it might probably induce not a few, to look farther into it, and dispose them to imbrace the rest with more facility, as I make no question but it did.

Of the observation of the *Seventh day*, as Sacred, and of the divisions of time, by weeks, or Seven days, antiently ; so much hath been written to and fro by very Learned men ; some deriving it from the first institution of God, *Gen. 2. 3.* others fetching it from other causes and considerations ; though I find that they are much put to it, that would assign it other causes, against the expresse testimony of so many ancients ; and that somewhat might be made, even of those causes which they assign, toward what we would have or think most probable ; yet I shall not insist upon it, or conclude any thing from it, certainly ; but leave it for any man to judge as he shall see cause : neither will I insist upon *Plato's* conceit, that *Man and woman were at first but one body, or two bodies*



in one, which probably might proceed from the taking of the Woman out of *Adams* side, as it is related in the Scriptures. It was but one mans conceit that we can find, and therefore may be thought less considerable. Yet, of the *imposition of names*, which is so particularly observed in the Scriptures, *Gen. 2. 19, 20.* very probable it is, that it gave *Plato* occasion to write in his *Cratylus*, that those who first imposed names, were not ordinary men, but *μετὰ τὸν δῶκεν, καὶ δὲ λέγει* ( words then of Honour, and Commendation: ) that is, *men capable of highest, or sublimest contemplations.* Whether out of the Scriptures, or out of *Plato*, derived into the *Alcoran*, I know not, but there I think I have read it, not only the Praises of *Adam*, but also that he was adored by the Angels for it.

As for the fall of *Adam* from that State and Place of happiness which he enjoyed before his sin; what some very antient have written of the *Præexistence of souls*, that it might very probably be derived from the story of it, as recorded in the Scriptures; we have given some reasons elsewhere, in the *original of Temporal evils*, printed many years ago, not needful I think to be here repeated. And though I do not here intend any observation of words, ( though very considerable in this subject; if done with good judgement and discretion: ) yet I will impart to the Reader, what my Father his opinion was concerning the Greek word,

word, ἀρεα taken for terra, (as ordinarily) or, the earth; to wit, that it had its original from the Hebrew word ארורה *arura*, which signifieth *malidicta*, or *accursed*: which word is used in the Sentence pronounced by God against the earth, *Gen.* 3. 17. His own words, in a Collection of *Hebrew roots*, (as usually called) and Greek words derived of them, intended by him for the publick, but not finished, are these:

ארר *maledixit*. Inde ἀρε, & ἀρνε. Sic & Ἄρε, ait *Herac. Pont. quem vide*. Etiam ἀρεα inde est: nam de terra dicitur ארורה *Gen.* 3. 17. Et quod sine substantivo ponitur, & quoque Hebraeis receptum usu; nedum Græcis: quibus fere perpetuum: Sic. 2 *Reg.* 9. 34. ארורה המלכה *maledictam illam: sub: mulierem*. Est hoc verum: nam historia Creationis mundi, multa peperit vocabula, & loquendi genera. Ut cum ἡ γῆ Thucyd. & Gr. dicitur, pro terra, ex Mose, qui vocat יִבְשָׁה. So he.

I know what will be objected, that the word is a pure Greek word, from ἀρεα; But it may be answered; first, that ἀρεα, doth not properly signifie (as conceived by many) *plowed ground*, but *terram*, or the *earth*, in general: as well a *Field*, or, *Meadow ground*, as any other; as by many instances might appear. So, ἐρώσιον ἀχθος ἀρεα, in *Homer*, more than once; of a man of no worth; (*fruges consumere natus*, to *Horace*;) is by others expressed (as by *Plato*, for one;) γῆς ἀχθος: that is, *pondus*; or, *onus terra*. And they that are versed in etymologies of words

cannot but know, that there is a *συγκυρία* in many words; that is, a kind of chance, or meer *rencontre*, by which many that judge of things by bare outward sound, or appearance, and seek no farther, are often deceived. Who would not, for example, that knows what *עביון* *ebion*, in Hebrew; or *מסורה* *mesura*; or *פלגש* *pillegest*; or, *אצילה* *atzilla*; or *אפתם* *aphtom*, doth signifie (with many others of the like nature,) who would not, I say, if he judge by the letters, and outward sound, verily think, that *ἀβίη*, in Greek; and *mensura*, and *pelllex*, and *axilla*, and *affatim* in Latin, are derived from them? which yet to believe, how ridiculous were it? This hath been treated of by us, more fully elsewhere. If therefore probable reason can be given, why *ἀργα* in Greek should have its original from the Hebrew *arura*: that *ἀργάω* comes so near to *ἀργα*; or *ἀργα*, to *ἀργάω*; a meer verbal *συγκυρία* (whereof in all languages so many examples are obvious) may be the cause. And if this be not improbable, (as I think it is not :) why may not, as probably, the Greek word *ἀργα*, (and what comes from it,) be ascribed to the same original (*אר*, or *ארג*) since (as generally believed) the invention of *Plows* and *Plowing*, was an effect of that Curse, or Divine Sentence against the earth, for the sin of man; without which Curse, or Sentence, the earth had afforded unto man sufficient maintenance without *his labour*, or *sweat of his brow*: according to that of the Poet, concerning the golden, or innocent age; *tellus inarata ferebat*, &c.



&c. The Greek Grammarians indeed (meer strangers to the Hebrew) tell us, that ἀρόν comes from ἀρns. *ferrum*; because of the Plow-share, which is *iron*: but this ἀρns for ought I know, is without example: though the Saxon *yron*, or *iren* doth incline me to believe, there might be such a Greek word anciently. But that granted, yet I think the Hebrew the more probable Etymology of the two. And by the way, somewhat might be made of that perchance, which is observed by *Pliny* (if it be true, and will agree with the plowing of those times :) that, *arator, nisi incurvus, pravaricatur*; that *the Plower, except he bow, doth prevaricate*; or ploweth not as he should do: to put him in mind, by the very posture of his body, of his sin, or *pravarication* from the command of his Maker. But lastly, I think it will not be thought improbable by any that have any insight in these things, and believes the Scriptures; that the Greek word ἡδονή (*pleasure*) came from that noted (which could not but occasion much discourse in the first ages of the world, amongst all men :) place of pleasure, and felicity, called עֵדֶן *Eden* in the Scripture; which also signifies *pleasure*. The rather we may believe this, because *Grecians*, (*Plato*, and others) have devised Etymologies of this word, far more remote and improbable, who take no notice of ἡδονή, or ἡδοναι, which a man would think (by the sound) much more probable, Which is the very case of ἀρετα.

But whatever may be thought of this ; what shall we say to that main business wherein all mankind were so much concerned, the sad story of *mans fall*, occasioned by his aspiring to more knowledge (though indeed it fell out quite contrary) then God saw convenient at that time: What if all that story, as to the substance of it, was known to ancient Heathens, and the memory of it by their writings, transmitted to Posterity? Upon this I shall enlarge my self, because I do not find it so fully, and, as I think it deserveth, done by any else. I say therefore that the memory of this was preserved, and continued in that known Story, or Fable (call it what you will) of *Prometheus* his stealing fire from Heaven. According to that of *Horace*,

*Audax Iapeti genus,  
Ignem fraude mala gentibus intulit,  
Post ignem etherea domo  
Subductum ; macies, & nova febris  
Terris incubuit cohers, &c.*

Whereby he doth imply, that all the evils which men suffer upon the earth, proceeded from that bold act, or theft.

But more fully *Hesiod*, whose antiquity is known, whose words are so express, that they may be thought to be taken from the Scripture. Surely had he intended it, I know not how he  
could

could have expressed it, in better words. Now by *πῦρ*, fire, that they understood *Wisdom* or *Knowledge*, is apparent, whilst they attribute the invention of all arts, and worldly wisdom, to the said *Prometheus* : by the help whereof they say, he brought men from the condition of Brutes, or little better than Brutes, (which some would have us to believe, to have been *Adams* condition, before he had eaten of the forbidden fruit of the *tree of knowledge*, and no mean men, that are, or have been of that opinion, though a great mistake, whoever they be;) to what they have been, since the invention of all arts and manufactures. All this is very particularly set out by the ancient Tragick Poet, *Æschylus*, in his *Prometheus* ; and his punishment, which was, that he was bound with chains to the Mountain *Caucasus*, an Eagle feeding perpetually, (a proper fiction to express the pains of hell, and the pains of the damned, whether Devils, or others) upon his heart, or liver ; which as fast as it spent, so fast was still renewed. Sure I am, that incomparable *Thuanus*, for learning and piety both, thought there was so much of truth in this Fable, or Story of *Prometheus*, as set out by *Æschylus* ; that of this heathen Tragedy, he hath made a Christian Tragick Poem, transferring the person of *Prometheus*, to that of the Devil, the principal Agent (according to the Scripture) in this sad Tragedy ; intituled *Parabata vinctus, sive Triumphus Christi*. I cannot forbear, were it but to invite others to the reading of such a worthy piece, (O, that the *Tragedies*



gedies and Comedies of our dayes, instead of that abominable licentiousness to abuse Scripture, as I have heard it reported, capable to bring all the Plagues of Heaven on the Land, had somewhat that resented of piety in them!) forbear I say, but must set down some of the verses of the Prologue, which thus begins:

*Permulta veteres seu Poeta, seu Sophi,  
Finxere amanis involuta fabulis,  
Qua fonte ab ipso veritatis hauserant:  
Ut, reliqua taceam, respice ad Promethea,  
Qui matre Clymena natus, Japeto patre,  
Menseque Divum particeps, & omnium  
Monstrator habitus & repertor artium,  
Ignem Jovi surripuit, atque noxium  
Munus fruendum præbuit Mortalibus,  
Unde inter ipsos coepit usus artium:  
At ille pœnas, &c.*

*Agedum vicissim mente nunc lapsus memor  
Primæ Parentis repete, qui contra Dei  
Mandata vetita mala carpsit arboris  
Ad impium instigante Parabata scelus,  
Qui calidi anguis ore dissimulans nefas,  
Scientiam spondebat esitantibus  
Bonæ malique, sortem & æqualem Deo,  
Quo factò in homines cuncta fluxerunt mala,  
&c.*

*Expende jam res propius, & confer simul,  
An ignis ille cum scientia arbore  
Non prorsus idem est, &c.*

*Et ista Grace Græco ab Æschylo quidem  
Conscripta quondam nomine sub Promethei,  
Qua*

*Quæ Christiano facta ab homine denique  
Latina, titulum, &c.*

If any shall ask, why not all this in English rather, truly I must answer, because it was beyond my skill to express it in such English, as would do the Latin, and the worthy Author, whose name is venerable in all parts of *Europe*, it not beyond, for his great worth, and worthy performances; great wrong. It may be some one who is better able, if he dare in these sad Atheistical times venture upon so much Christianity, without too much disparagement to his wit, will think of it, to translate the whole Tragedy. But to return; Why those Ancients expressed wit and wisdom by πῦρ, or fire, may easily be known by ancient *Hippocrates*, whose words are (elsewhere by me produced, τὸ θερμότατον καὶ ισχυρότατον πῦρ -- ἐν ᾧ τὸ Ψυχὴ νόος, φρόνησις, &c. that is, *Fire is the most active (hottest) and strongest of all things: in fire (or fiery nature) are the soul, the Mind (or Will) and prudence.* And again; δοκεῖ δὲ μοι ὃ καλεόμεν θερμόν, ἀθάνατον ἢ εἶναι, καὶ νοεῖν πάντα καὶ ὁρᾶν, καὶ ἀκρίβειαν, καὶ εἰδέναι Πάντα, καὶ τὰ ὄντα καὶ τὰ μέλλοντα ἔσθαι: that is, *I am of opinion, that what men call heat, θερμόν, (which sometimes, to Hippocrates, is a quality; sometimes a substance, saith Galen) is immortal; that immortal essence (or, the immortal) which understandeth all things, seeth all things, heareth all things, knoweth all things, both present, and future.* What should it be, but God certainly; a consuming fire, in the Scripture; though there upon another consideration.

Now

Now let us observe some circumstances of the story. *Jupiter*, they say, had hid this *πῦρ*, or fire, that *Prometheus* found out. God had forbidden strictly the tree of knowledge to *Adam*, but *Adam* made bold though, and did eat. *Jupiter*, they write, to be revenged on *Prometheus* and all mankind; caused a woman (the first woman that ever was, some write) to be framed by *Vulcan*, called *Pandora*; which woman was the cause of all the mischiefs, that have been known in the world. How far *Eve*, the first woman, was accessory to our evils, (she, more than *Adam*, the Scripture doth teach: ) who know's not that is a Christian? True it is, there be many particulars of this Story, differently related, by different men. But those I have hitherto mentioned, are the most ordinary; and I think I shall not need to seek farther into it to make good what I have said of it.

Now if any body shall ask, (a bold question I confess; but upon this occasion I may not omit it) what made God to forbid *Adam* the *Tree of knowledge*: what the Devil suggested to *Eve*, we know, if we believe him, that it was meer envy, lest he (with his Posterity) should be as Gods, knowing good and evil; but might be kept in perpetual ignorance. Though the Devil did not use the word it self, expressly; yet the sense of the word, he doth; plainly charging God with envy; so that scarce any Commentator, ancient or late, who writes upon the place, but doth expressly lay it to the Devils



vils charge, that he charged God with *envy*, in those words: And as the Devil, so *Porphyrus* (cited by *Stev. Engubinus*) that miscreant Philosopher, very peremptorily, Πάνας, φθονεῶς ἀνθρώπων, φθονῶντος τῆς δ'εὐ, &c. that is, *questionless, out of meer envy that tree was forbidden them, God envying men Knowledge, and purposing they should continue fools, (or, idiots.)* A very likely thing that he who made them, could not so make them, as that by nature they had not been capable of any farther knowledge, than he had allotted them; and prevent the danger of eating of that tree, had it been so, that he had been lyable to any such thing, (of all humane infirmities, the most ignoble :) as *envy* is. But *Eve* believed him, and the tradition (the Devil still helping) hath passed current to all Heathens, known to us, of any antiquity; that all the evils, and miseries of the world proceed from *the envy of God to Mankind*. A tradition so rooted in the minds of ancient Heathens, that some, even after they were become Christians, (none of the meanest, neither :) and sure enough abhorred the opinion; yet found it an hard task to forsake the words and speeches, flowing from the opinion they had been used to, when Heathens. But I shall not need long to insist upon this, because my self have written, and published, long ago, a *Discourse* (before mentioned) of this Subject, intituled, *The Original of temporal evils, &c.* 1645. to which, though much might have been added since, yet there is enough there, as then printed, to satisfy the most scrupulous, and morose.

But

But I desire the Reader to give me leave, though to be found there, yet here also to do *Aristotle* some right, whom I must confess, ever since I began to understand, what doth belong to reason, because I found my reason so much advantaged by him; I have much honored, and now more than ever, because I see many not well affected to Religion, that is, friends and admirers of *Epicurus*, very ready to quarrel with him, and slight him upon every occasion. *Aristotle* then in his *Metaphysicks* (l. i. c. 2.) treating of the excellency, and sublimity of that noble Science, takes notice of an objection made by some, that such high and sublime Contemplations, which have no reference, and were of no use to the things of this world, or to the necessities of this life, (as the phrase is now) did not belong to man: that God had reserved such things to himself, and would not admit of man, a slavish creature in many respects, to be partaker of such happiness. Certain it is, that both before, and since *Aristotle*, divers Poets, and others, had said it, that mortal man should not meddle with things immortal: nay, that God, or *Jupiter* doth hate them, who aspire to the knowledge of high things; or in the Apostles Phrase, excellent: as *Euripides* particularly, in those words quoted elsewhere, by the same *Aristotle*: τοῦ θεοῦ σέβας καὶ τὴν ἀθάνατον πλὴν, ζεὺς μισεῖ, whom the same *Aristotle* doth very divinely, and like himself, rebuke and refute, in the tenth book of his *Ethicks*. To the same purpose is

that

that of *Sophocles*; *μισῶ τὸν, ὃς ἀφανῆ διεσκόπει.*  
*I hate him who seeks after things that are not visi-*  
*ble*: which was scoffingly (according to his wit,  
 and manner :) supplied by *Aristophanes*; *ὃς ἀ-*  
*φανῆ μεριμνᾷ, καὶ τὰ χαμόθεν ἐδίδει*: *who takes care*  
*of things invisible, but feeds upon things that*  
*grow out of the earth*: to which *Statius*,  
 the learned Commentator of *Aratus*, doth  
 wittily, and like a Philosopher reply; *ἡμεῖς*  
*δὲ τὰ φαινόμενα*: To which *St. Augustine*  
 might seem to allude (but indeed he takes it  
 out of the Scripture) *Nolite querere quæ vi-*  
*dentur, (τὰ φαινόμενα) sed quæ non viden-*  
*tur*: *De vera Religione*, about the beginning.  
 But here the man, whom *Aristotle* doth cite, is  
*Simonides*, a very ancient Poet, whose words  
 are, *θεὸς ἂν τῷτο ἔχῃ τὸ γέρας, ἀνδρὰ δ' ἐκ ἀξίου*  
*μὴ ζῆτεῖν τὴν κατ' ἑαυτὸν ἐπὶ σήμερον.* Most Editions  
 I have seen make these words to belong to *Si-*  
*monides*; yet *Aldus* his Edition *A. D. 1497.*  
 doth acknowledge but the first words, *θεὸς μόνῳ*  
*τῷτο ἔχῃ τὸ γέρας*, to belong to the Poet, and  
 the rest to be *Aristotle's*: and accordingly *Ful-*  
*vius Ursinus*, that learned Roman, in the frag-  
 ments of the Lyrick Poets by him set out, with  
 Animadversions, quotes no more, but just so  
 much, as supposing what followeth to be *Ari-*  
*stotles* own words. Yet my opinion is, though  
 the first member may be thought to have more  
 of a verse in it, than the latter; that they must  
 go together, as *Simonides* his words; whereof  
 the meaning is, that *this boon* (the happiness, or  
 capability of sublime Metaphysical contempla-  
 tions)



tions) or Honour doth belong unto God alone; and that it is not fit that man neglect that science or knowledge which doth properly belong to him; or rather, allowing of a *trajection* in the words; not fit that man should seek after that Science which doth not properly belong to him: Whereupon Aristotle goes on; And if that of the Poets be true, (saith he) that God can envy (*πείνην θεὸς ἐφείλετο τοῖς ἀνθρώποις*) in this particular (of knowledge and contemplation) it is most likely to be, and that all men who aspire to such excellency, are *unfortunate*: An admirable saying (or sentence) and well worthy such a noble minded man as Aristotle was: that if man be miserable, it is not so much for any temporal evil, which he is subject unto, and whereof ordinary men are so sensible (which made ordinary Writers to apply that complaint of the *Divine envy*, to those temporal, not spiritual evils, commonly;) but because he is not capable of more knowledge. But let us hear the rest, which is not less admirable: But neither is it a thing possible, (*οὐκ ἐνδέχεται*) that God should envy, but according to the Proverb, Poets will feign many things (or, often lye;) neither ought we to make more reckoning of any other science (or knowledge) than of this. By which last words Aristotle may be thought to contradict the latter part of *Simonides* his assertion, (and so no *trajection*, to be admitted of in the words;) which also will confirm what we said before, that this latter part is part of the quotation out of *Simonides*. Now what Poets were particularly charged by Aristotle

*Aristotle* to have said, that *πρόκειται φθονὴν τὸ θεῶν* : that it is the nature of God to envy, is not easie to resolve. Of Historians we know *Herodotus* of old hath been noted by more than one ; deeply charged by *Plutarch*, particularly, as the first Author of this blasphemy ; who indeed (though *Plutarch* quote but one place) doth deliver it in many places, four at least, as I remember. I did once think that *Aristotle* intended no other then *Simonides* here ; but I think otherwise now, or at least, not him onely. *Eustathius* upon the last *Iliad*, doth seem to ascribe some such thing to *Homer*, where also *Herodotus* is mentioned. But he doth not absolutely say so ; neither could indeed, without doing the Poet some wrong ; whereof more in the *Treatise* before mentioned : somewhat is amiss I conceive in the words of *Eustathius* ; the sense would be plainer, I am sure, if we read, τοῖς ὑπερέχουσιν αὐτὸς τὰς ταπεινότερας φέρεται ; or τὸς ὑπερέχοντας ἰσχυρὰ καὶ τὰς ταπεινότερας φέρεται. But that is not my business : who only aimed at the commendation of *Aristotle's* Reverend esteem and opinion of the Deity ; which is very consonant to many other expressions of his, in other places of his works : what he saith here, that the consideration, and contemplation of the first causes (which must needs bring men, if not very brutish, to the acknowledgement of a God, as he shews a little after : ) may well be thought a speculation more then humane, or above man : what he writes to the same purpose in his *Ethicks*, may give much light to it ; for there he doth consider

man in a double capacity; either as a meer mortal Creature, of an earthly substance, consisting of such a body, and what hath relation to such life: and as a Creature or animal, that hath somewhat in it from without, that is meerly Divine; and so, capable of things supernatural and Divine. Now to live according to the Divine part, or portion of man, he saith plainly, *is νοετικὴ βίη ἢ ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη, is a better or happier life then man is capable of as meer man; but not as εἰς τὴν ἐν αὐτῷ ἀνδρείη, as there is somewhat in him Divine* (or, came from God immediately :) whereby *Aristotle* whatsoever he saith of it, or may be thought to say elsewhere, doubtfully; doth cleerly (except a man can think, that what is acknowledged *Divine* in man, can perish with the body) imply the immortality of the soul. But how the resurrection of the dead may be inferred from the words with some others of the same Authors added to it; I leave that to *Pacius*, that learned and faithful interpreter of *Aristotle*. Thus we may see, how many learned Heathens have done their parts to draw men from sensual material objects, to which naturally so prone most men are; to the contemplation of things Spiritual and Eternal; when many Christians now adays, who would be thought great Patrons of true Learning and Benefactors to Mankind, propose to men things sensual and material, as the only objects (*Divinity* it self being by them reduced to very narrow limits) worthy the consideration.

Now



Now this of *the envy of the Gods* laid aside; if I should ask what is the Scripture tradition concerning *the cause of temporal evils* and miseries, to which Mankind is lyable; if it be answered, as it must, *Sin*: I ask, how came the antients by this knowledge or wisdom, who have retained the very original word *ΝΥΝ* the aspiration onely neglected, as is ordinary; *αὐτῶν*, to which they usually ascribe the cause of all evils. Let any man but read what *Homer* writes of it, in his tenth *Iliad*, where he makes *Ate* to be quick and nimble, of great strength and activity, and in that condition to run through the earth: (we know, who being asked, *whence he came*, answered God, *from going to and fro in the earth, and walking up and down in it*, *Job* 17. and 11.2. and elsewhere compared to a rearing *Lyon* walking about and seeking, &c. *Pet.* 1. 5. 8.) *to hurt or mischief men*, (his words *ἐδίδου ὃ ἵε πάντων ἐπὶ αἰῶν; βλάπτει δὲ ἀνθρώπους*;) but followed, by *λίπε*, *Jupiters Daughters* lame and rugged, or wrinkled and purblind, (in the Scripture phrase it would be, *covered with sackcloth and ashes*;) which if received and much made of by men, they cure them of the mischief *Ate* hath done them: if not, they make their complaint to *Jupiter* their Father, by whom, they who have suffered by *Ate* are delivered to the power of it again: Let them say that have read it in *Homer*, what man, in a Poetical way, could set out better, and more plainly, the power or nature of sin, or of repentance, then he doth? Now if any man say, that *Sin* origi-

ginally came into the world; rather by the envy of the Devil, (who wickedly would have laid it upon God) then by the Sin of man, or, *Ate*: according to that of the wise man; *For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity: nevertheless, through envy of the Devil, came death into the world: and they that do hold of his side do find it*: Wisd 2. 23. 24. there be that tell us, that φθόνος, envy in Greek; came from ὄφης a kind of serpent (of the worst and most venomous:) often mentioned in the Scripture, which is not improbable, if not absolutely true. *Virgil* in that Divine *Eclogue*, (whereof more afterwards) which begins, *Sicelides Musa*, &c doth allude to the said *αὐτὴ* of the ancients, as set out by them to be the cause of all the Miseries the earth is infested with; but that he more plainly doth express the meaning of the word, and calls it *Sin* or *Wickedness*:

*Te Duce, siqua manent sceleris vestigia nostri;  
Irrita, perpetua solvent formidine terras.*

But whence he had it, more of that in due time.

But I proceed. Of the First institution of *Sacrifices*, or Sacrificing by slaying of Beasts, whether at first by immediate Divine authority, or by some instinct of nature, or natural reason; all men do not agree; and to examine the reasons on both sides, would take much time. Sure we are, we have an example in the Scripture, much ancients then any we read of,

of, or can read in any Author besides; by how much we know the Scripture to be more ancient than any humane Writer now extant, or ever extant that we read of. That from this example or president, it was derived to all nations that have used it, (as all or most nations are known to have done:) is very probable, for two reasons: First, because the reasons that are given for it by wisest Heathens, are generally very ridiculous, As that, First, they were therefore acceptable, because the Deities fed, or at least, were delighted with the *nidor* or *smoak* of such offerings, which I will not say was the opinion of all or wisest Heathens; but of many, not of the vulgar only, but better sort too: insomuch, that *Marcus Aurelius*, though so great a Prince, yet not inferior to the chiefest Philosophers, being personated, or made to speak by *Julian* the Apostate in that wicked but learned Satyr of his, Entituled, *Ἰστορικὴ Καίσιρος*; makes him say in good earnest, (according to his own, if not *Aurelius* his belief:) that he believed (but, *ἵσως μὲν οὐκ ὠκείως*, that is, that he was not very peremptory in his belief:) that the bodies of the Gods, *οὐκ ἐν ἑστῇ ἀναθυμιάσεων ἔσθης*, that is, *wanted the nourishment of such exhalations, or vapors*. And *Dio Chrysostomus*, that famous, both Orator and Philosopher, in his *Rhodiaca* to the same purpose, with an *ἵσως* (out of *Julian*, I should say, but that he lived long before:) *ὃ δὲ καὶ πάλαι ἵσως ἔδειξε ὁ Θεός, οἷον ἀγαλμάτων, ἢ θυσιῶν*. But in very deed, that such Gods, as most of theirs,



that is, *Devils* did receive some kind of nourishment, from the *ἀναθυμίασις* of such Sacrifices, is the opinion of some ancient Fathers: as *Basilus* by name; whose words, as entered by my Father in his *Adversaria*, out of a Manuscript of *Oxford* Library, not then Printed, (whether since, as he wished it, *Dignus qui edatur*, &c. I know not;) upon *Isaiah*, are with his own; *Damones ali nidore victimarum, & thuris*, &c. *Fuse hoc disputat mox Basilus, & ait, ali eos non διὰ μαρώσεως καὶ κοιλίας, ἀλλ' ὡς αἱ τρίχες τῆς ζώης, καὶ ὀνυχες, καὶ ὅσα πικῶτα, εἰς ὅλην τὴν εἶσαν τὴν ἐκτὴν καλεστέαν*: that is, *not by chewing, and the benefit of a belly, but as hairs and nails in Creatures, and the like, which receive their nourishment into the whole substance*. However, if the Gentiles did beleieve it of their Gods, it may be those words of the Scripture. *Gen. 8.21. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour*: or, a savour of rest; might perchance, being mistaken, give them some grounds: but this by the way only. Another reason is given by *Salust* the Philosopher, set out by *Leo Allatius*, and *Lucas Holstenius* at *Rome*; which is: *The end, or happiness of man is to be joyned to God; God is life, and Man hath life; these therefore to be joyned, there must be a medium, which hath life; and that is, brute Beasts*. A weak reason, God knows; yet I find not much better in any of them through ignorance of the true cause, which as I take it, was no other then this Scripture president, or example; and therein, a special providence of God, to dispose all nations the better

better in due time, to embrace the faith, concerning the *Lamb of God slain for the sins of the world*; and the rather we may believe it, because since Christ, the original cause of the institution, was once sacrificed; such sacrifices began to cease in all parts of the world; as of the Romans and Roman Empire, *Pliny's* Letter, where he Treats of Christianisme, doth testify, and have been quite discontinued in most places, though under several Religions and Professions, this thousand years and upwards.

One observation more; because I am in that Chapter, I will add, and end this subject with it. When *Cain* had wickedly killed his Brother, part of the judgement solemnly pronounced by God against him (which it seems *Cain* took most to heart; for in his complaint or expostulation with God, he takes notice of that only:) is, *A fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth*: how cometh it to pass, think we, that in ancientest times, among the Grecians especially, such an opinion was so general, and the practise as general as the opinion; that no other expiation of Murther was available or satisfactory to God or Man; but a vagabond wandring life, accompanied with such and such Ceremonies as we shall shew by and by? Learned *Grotius* upon *Mat. v. 40.* takes notice of it, and derives it from this first institution or sentence against *Cain*, and to this end quotes the words of *Euripides* καλῶς ἔδρατο ταῦτα πατέρες οἱ πάλαι, εἰς ὀμμάτην, &c. that is, *Well did*

did our ancient Fathers order this, that he that was guilty of blood, might not be admitted either to fight, or to mutual converse, but should expiate his crime (συζαῖσι) by flights; but not to suffer death for death. But what wonder, may some body say, if murther in some places, especially not wilful, or intended, were punished by flight or banishment? no wonder at all, but we shall find more in this, not so easily avoided, before we have done with it. For first, we have several examples of Princes, and others (some Kings:) whom no Law did compel; but a strong opinion, that without this kind of expiation, they should ever be miserable and liable to greatest mischiefs; did put them upon it. This may farther appear by the circumstances or ceremonies of their flight. One is, that they were wont to carry with them some part or parcel of the body by them slain, hanging at their necks; which they were perswaded, did much conduce to their safety, as effectual, both to appease the wrath of God. and the *Manes* of the murdered; and to provoke the compassion of the living. This we learn partly from *Hesychius*; in *μασχαλισμός* &c. and from *Apollonius* the Poet, of good antiquity, in those words of his; *Ἡρως δ' Ἀισονίδης ἐξαρρματι τανυε δανόνη*. *Ulysses* after he had slain the *Proci*, and such of his domestiques as he found guilty, is sent away by an Oracle to a far Countrey, carrying all the way, *ἑνὶ περὶ ἑρμῆν*, a plain Oar upon his shoulder: this carefully performed, he is promised at his return, many good days in his own



own Country; the Government whereof he had. It is not impossible, but what the Scripture recordeth of a *mark*, set upon *Cain* for his security, that he might not be killed by any that met him; (which *mark* what it was, and wherein it consisted, was never certainly known, I think, but by conjectures since *Moses*, if he knew it) might occasion such uncouth rites, as those we have mentioned, which tended to this, that wheresoever they came, it might be known to all men, that some extraordinary thing had happened unto them, or was done by them, for which they did undergo this hardship, or punishment. But if those were in the right, or had any ground for their opinion, who did maintain, that this *mark* consisted in a kind of *trembling* or *fighing*, and sadness of countenance (which was the opinion of divers of the Fathers, grounded upon the translation of the *Septuagint*, partly where we read in the Divine Sentence, *σίκων καὶ τρέμουσιν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς*; and was then the translation of the Latin Church also, as doth appear by *St. Augustine*, and others :) we have it fully set out by *Apollonius* in two of those blood-guilty Vagabonds, *Jason*, and *Medea* by name, who being driven by contrary winds to *Circe*, (a great Sorceress, but of great extraction, and kindred) her Palace; whereas she would have given them that reception which became such noble guests; and offered them seats fitting for them; they refused, but *ἀνέω καὶ ἀναυδῶς*, *still, and speechless*, ran to the *Focus*, or *ἑστία* (which was sacred, and inviolable

lable) of the house, and there sate; she covering her face with both her hands; he, laying his sword aside; neither of them having the confidence to look forwards (that is, with a dejected countenance) as poor miserable supplicants. *which Circe observing, ἀντίκα δ' ἔγνω Κίρκη εὐχόμενον, ἀλιτρώσυνας ἔε φίλοιο: ) presently understood their flying calamity, and their crime, blood-shedding.* Now that this sad behaviour and countenance in them, that did fly for murder; was no voluntary thing, but either by law enjoyned, or, upon a presumption, that their flying and wandering, would do them no good, if not accompanied with this necessary circumstance besides the generality of the practise, (observed as well by them that undertook this penance being induced into it meerly by the force of general tradition, or opinion; as by those that were compelled by law;) somewhat may be gathered out of *Plato's Law*, (though never enforced) who in the ninth Book, or Dialogue of his *Laws*, treating very exactly of all kinds of murders, and of punishments, which he thought proper to each kind; doth enact, that when the time of every mans flight, or banishment should become, twelve men should be appointed, and sent to the utmost borders of the Country, to enquire diligently into the actions and demeanours of the banished, or vagabonds; καὶ τῆς αἰδομένης, καὶ κατὰ δόκην ἰστέων δικάσας γίνεσθαι, that is (if there be any such word as δόκη, for δόκησις; which *Hesychius* doth seem to own) according to this reading, *to be judges of their shame (or remorse)*

remorse) and confusion. This is the reading of the Basil Edition, the only now left me ; besides one part of Aldus. But if with others we read it *καταδοχῆς* ; to be judges of their shame, and reception : (so Ficinus doth translate ) that is, as I conceive, how they had behaved themselves where they were received, or entertained, and by whom. After so much said of Gods sentence against Cain, though I have done with that I proposed to my self, to shew the probability of ancientest Heathens practise to be derived from it : yet I cannot, before I pass to other matter, but take notice of St. Augustines observation and exposition of it, as it is by him applyed to the Jews, as a manifest judgment of God against them, for that horrible murder committed by them upon the person of the Son of God, (as God, so man,) and Redeemer of the world : which judgment of God, so notorious, and visible, as set out by that learned Father ; it alone well pondered, and considered, were enough I think to convert an Infidel to the Christian faith, that hath not too much of Epicurus his spirit in him. I make no question, but St. Augustine may insist upon it, (as it well deserveth) more than once, and other ancients too beside him : but the place that now offered it self to my remembrance, is in the sixth Tome of his works, in the twelfth of his books against *Faustus Manicheus*, Ch. xii. of my Edition (the only now I have, or can well use) pag. 323. 324.



Now if any can think all this, that hath been observed, could happen without any reference to the Scripture Story, by those that first instituted, or observed such Rites and Ceremonies; let them enjoy the liberty of their judgments, so they do not pass a rash judgment on them, that are of a different opinion, and think they have reason to be so. For my part, I must confess, that in reading ancientest Authors, Poets, and others; but *Homer* especially, I have received such satisfaction, as that, had I no other ground to induce me to believe the antiquity of the Scriptures, which they pretend unto; and the probability of the matters they contain; this very consideration would have been a great motive unto me: so many things do I find of that nature from the beginning to the end, which, to me, seem in a manner indubitable. Yet I do not deny, that in such observations, some men have proceeded with so little judgment, as that they may be thought to have given just occasion to others much to suspect, or plainly to deride such enquiries. Others, though more learned, yea very learned, and judicious; though they have done very well, so that very good use may be made of their labours; yet (such is the nature of this study, except great care be taken) have indulged happily to their fancies overmuch, in some things, and weakned the credit of their more solid enquiries thereby. And yet let me say, that though so much hath been done, and very well done in that kind already, not  
without

without some mixture of too much *credulity*, or curiosity ( shall I say ) sometimes ; yet there is much left to the Learned and Judicious, who shall make it their study ; much left, I say, except much more be done ( which is very possible ) then is yet come to my hands, or knowledge, To these kind of observations, as we have mentioned, grounded upon the story of things recorded in the Scripture ; we may add, not observations of words only, the ancient Greek Tongue, certainly ( of all ancient tongues of greatest extent ) being an offspring of the Hebrew ; from which also the names of most of the Deities, that have been worshipped in the world anciently, may be derived : but also the consideration of the names, and appellations of *Peoples*, and *Nations*, and *Families*, by which the earth hath been inhabited ; whereof no certain account can be given, but from the Scriptures, and the Hebrew, ( the old Testament ; ) wherein it is written. This hath been the task of many learned men, but of learned *Bochartus* of late, with the applause of all learned ingenious men, whether Romanists, or others.

The next thing I shall insist on, because not so pressed by any I know of, as I conceive it doth deserve ; is St. *Augustines* observation concerning the Nation of the Jews, by a singular providence of God ( as he doth argue it ) preserved, as for other ends, and purposes ; so particularly, to attest unto all the world the truth of those Scriptures, and their divine authority ; upon  
which

which the Christian Religion is chiefly grounded; though by the same Scriptures, their own *incredulity*, or infidelity, is revealed, and made known to all men, who want not either care or opportunity to consider of it. I called it St. *Augustines* observation, not because he was the first, or only that doth insist on it, (for divers others do, and among those, *Iustin Martyr*; much ancients than St. *Augustine*; ) but because I do not remember any ancient, that doth so fully, or so often insist on it, as St. *Augustine* doth; as a thing indeed very observable in my judgment, and of great weight to confirm the truth of Christian Religion against all Infidels, and Miscreants. For the Divine authority of the Scriptures of the *Old Testament*, being the best hold it can pretend unto, (of miracles we may consider by and by) and upon which the credit of the *New* doth depend much: who can look upon it but as a singular Providence of God, that the greatest enemies the Christians, and their Religion had in the world, should so miraculously (whereof more by and by) be preserved, and continue a distinct People, and Nation, among all Nations of the world, whether they have been scattered; of purpose, (who can think otherwise?) notwithstanding such persecutions, confusions, internecions, and *Panoleturies*, as they have suffered in most places; but to bear witness to the truth of the said Scriptures? And if there were a Providence then in St. *Augustines* time; what can we make of it in these times, so many ages since; and the Jewes having



ving suffered so much since in all places of the world? Where, and how often *St. Augustine* doth treat of it, I will not take upon me to give an account; it is very likely he doth in many more places, than I can, at this time, call to mind. But he doth, I am sure, (and it may be well worth the Readers time, to peruse his own words) in his books against *Faustus* the Manichean, *lib. 12. c. 23.* and *lib. 13. c. 10. lib. 16. c. 21.* and to *iv. De fide rerum invis. 65. 6.* and *Epist. iii. ad Volus.* and *De Civitate Dei lib. 18. c. 46.* and in his Sermons, *De Temp. 78.* and upon *Psal, 58.* as I find him quoted by *Baron. a. D. 72. 30.* if he be not mistaken in his quotation. By which passages it may appear what good use they made, the Christians of those dayes, of this Providence of God, against Heathens, and Manicheans, and other like Infidels. Truly for my part, when I seriously consider of it, first how hateful the Jews were, even before Christ, and to all Nations generally; upon this account meerly, because they looked upon all other Nations, as meer cast away, Godless Idolaters; and themselves the only people of the earth, whom God, owned and favoured, (whose ordinary churlishness upon that account towards all other men, is noted by the Satyrift,

*Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra Colenti;  
Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos;*

Which must needs render them abominable to all men;) how this hatred hath encreased since their slaying of the *Messias*, and the spreading  
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of Christianity in the world; how much occasion they have given to all men (Christians especially) to seek their ruine; and how many occasions have been taken, through meer covetousness and avarice, without any other ground, but the publick common hatred; and yet still, how they hold out, and continue a distinct Nation and a People by themselves, in so many Nations; I look upon it as an effect of Gods great power, and wondrous providence, not inferior to those things and events, which are most wondered at in the world. That they have been accessory to their own evils and sufferings, in many places of the world, sometimes by unjust practises and attempts; by rebellions and insurrections; by unmerciful exactions and oppressions, where it hath been in their power, and the like; it is sure enough, and all histories will witness. And a great wonder, even so, that after such slaughters of them in divers ages and places in the world, the like whereof I have not read of any Nation; any of them should be left in the world. But laying this aside, what they have brought on themselves by such provocations; if we consider what they have suffered in most ages, and places of *Europe*, by unjust oppression, and for imaginary causes, and suspicions! except we should suppose them of the nature of the fabulous *Hydra*, or that *Davis ut illex tonsa bipennibus*, which, *per damna, per cædes ab ipso ducit opes, animumq; ferro*, the Poet speaks of, that should propagate and increase by death, and destruction, which would be as incredible;

ble; but either way, we shall find just cause of admiration, and be driven I think to the acknowledgement of a *digitus Dei*, or peculiar providence. I cannot, I confess, without some horror and much commiseration, read in best Historians, what they have suffered in that kind: as particularly, upon a fame or suspicion, that in hatred to Christ or Christians upon such a day, they had sacrificed or crucified a man, or boy, child, or otherwise tormented them: which as I cannot deny, but that they might do in some one place or other, truly and really: yet that they should so often, and in so many places, and kingdoms, as they have been charged, and thereupon suffered judgements, massacres, banishments, and the like; I have ground enough not to beleieve, which I shall not now stand further upon. But yet by the way, I wonder at *Langius*, who in his *Medicinal Epistles* hath collected many such stories: for the Child, which is reported to have been martyred by them, A.D. 1475. at *Tridentum*; he should refer us (*ed. Franc. 1589. pag. 427.*) to *Eusebius*, his *Chronicon*. *Langius* was too learned I am sure, to commit such a mistake. But it may be, it is my mistake, and that he intends it of some later *Eusebius*, who hath written of that argument. But yet *Eusebius*, without any other addition, will, I suppose, be understood by most, of the famous, antient *Eusebius*, whom all men know to have written a *Chronicon*; of high credit and esteem among all; whatever was the occasion of such an unusual expression. But to our

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purpose



purpose; whether the Jews suffered justly or unjustly, as to this observation, is not at all material: and either way, there may be (if Atheistical ears will bear the repetition of *Providence* so often, and not deem it *Superstition*:) a providence in that too, or rather a just judgement observed, as they are (these later Jews) their posterity, who once not onely did put to death most unjustly, *that just one*, whose blood yet crys for vengeance, and the vengeance of whose blood they did solemnly imprecate upon themselves, and their Children (*his blood be upon us and our children*) as it stands upon Holy records to this day. To our purpose, I say, whether they suffered justly or unjustly, is all one, to shew, that after such sufferings, such destructions, so great and so frequent; it is a miracle that any are left at this day. But since we are now upon it, let us see a little farther, what inventions have been in the world to destroy them. That such an opinion hath been in the world, that the Jews naturally did smell very offensively; *Bazonius*, and after him, some others endeavour to prove out of *Ammianus Marcellinus*, who wrote under *Gratianus* and *Valentianus* the Roman Emperours: I do not think that passage doth sufficiently prove it; yet that there hath been since such an opinion common enough in the world, that not only *Jews*, but *Saracens* also, and other oriental people do so, or did so; and such an opinion among some *Turks*, that by Christian baptism such a *fever* is cured I will not deny. But now, how one  
mistake

mistake ( for I apprehend it so: ) will beget another; especially, when men of purpose seek occasion upon this conceit; another hath been raised, and passed for current among many, that the Jews, to cure themselves of this disease, thirst after Christian blood, to drink it; and others say, they carry it with them, that they may be well. I doubt they thirsted more after Jewish blood, who were the first authors of this device, then the Jews (upon such an occasion) ever thirsted after Christians: yet I see some Learned men would have the opinion ( this bloody opinion ) to proceed from the ambiguity of the Hebrew word דם, which, as ordinarily it signifies *Bloud*; so (among later Hebrews at least, and Rabbins:) it signifies *Money*: which is very true, of the Plural at least, as by their proverb, כסף לורמין, and by their paraphrases on the Scripture, doth appear. But whither from the ambiguity of this word, or the publick *odium* most men have conceived against the nation, I am not satisfied. But Gods providence doth not only appear in the preservation of the Jews through so many revolutions in general; but also in the means he doth use to that end; which is chiefly, their extraordinary thriving in most places where they are suffered to live; so that, though sufficiently hated every where; yet it is the interest of many places where they live, to have them. I had not staid so long upon this, but that *St Augustine's* so frequent insisting on it, as a great argument of Gods

vidence, for the better evidencing the Divine authority of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, (upon which, as before said, hangs the authority of the New also : ) now that so many ages since past hath made it so much more considerable, and indeed admirable ; I would not pass it over slightly : and whatever any man may think of it, I am very confident, that as in those primitive times it was an evidence for the Scriptures, as great as any was, and stood Christians in as much stead as any other, so the want of it, ( though not so much perchance ) had the nation of the Jews been quite extinct, or not continued a different people from all other nations ; would have been found in any age.

But now, if after all this, some shall object, that the Old Testament we have received from the Jews, is of no authority, and instead of it, endeavour to ascribe and vindicate that authority to the *Greek* translation of the Old Testament, which was made ( for we will not dispute it, though, as then in *St Augustines* time ; or, as now extant ; much intermingled and adulterated : ) by the *Septuagint*. if they can really and solidly : then indeed we must acknowledge that *St Augustine* was, and we after him miserably mistaken : and though we may still admire the providence of God in the preservation of the Jews to this day, as a distinct people, &c. for which some other reasons may be given of good moment ; ( as their expected conversion, and



and the like : ) yet in this particular of the Scriptures of the old Testament, we must acknowledge our error, and revoke what we have said ; and this the more willingly, because such peculiar observations of providence made either out of policy or ignorantly, where there is no ground, may give no small advantage to Atheisme ; and if po'itickly done, as is very ordinary ( and never more I think, then in the times of the late Rebellion : ) a great sign of Atheisme. If it be said that the substance of the Hebrew Copies we had from the Jews, ( the same they still have themselves, and account Authentick ; ) doth agree with that Greek Translation, which therefore the ancient Fathers who had no others, did use and maintain as authentick ; and therefore that providence may have place still in the preservation of the Jews, to be as *St Augustine* doth call them, the *Scriniarii* or *Capsarii* of it : To this I answer, that I do not deny but Greek and Hebrew do agree ( take the whole Testament in a lump : ) in the substance well enough ; so that they that had the Greek onely, might account it *the word of God*, generally ; ( whereof more by and by : ) yet considering the vast difference in particulars, ( which might have made a difference in the main substance, but that what was amiss in one place, might be made up and supplied by store of other places to the same purpose : ) a great objection both against this preserving providence, and against the truth of both Copies, Greek and Hebrew, might be ;

that both being made authentick by Christians, and of Divine authority, it was not likely, if possible, that the Divine Spirit should contradict it self in so many places: this doth oblige me to take some notice of the business, which of late hath been in debate among very Learned men on both sides; but as I conceive, is so well settled and decided to our hands already, as that we cannot dwell upon it long, except we should make it our business (which I never affected) rather to transcribe than to invent or supply: onely for their sakes that have not had the occasion or opportunity to enquire into this matter hitherto; I shall give this brief account. First, for the passages of the New Testament, whereby the Greek Translation, because used by the Apostles sometimes, doth seem to some to be made authentick; it will appear to be but a frivolous observation; First, because they do not keep to it always; (not in some places especially, where it doth most disagree with the *Hebrew*) and Secondly, because it was very expedient, if not necessary, writing to the Gentiles, and to the Jews in all places, where they were scattered and settled among the Gentiles; they should make use of that Translation which the Gentiles could understand; when the Jews themselves that lived among them, most of them were strangers to the Hebrew, and read their Bible as translated in the Greek. As for Fathers, it will appear, that most of them being ignorant of the Hebrew, there was a necessity they should make much

much of the Translation they had, which served them well enough for the main design; though withal it will appear, that the Learnedst of them do frequently, so far as their skill afforded them, appeal, not to other Translations onely, as different; but even to the Hebrew Text as authentick. And that those Fathers that understood the Hebrew, and could read the Old Testament in its proper original Language, have not been wanting to vindicate the authority of it against all Translations, where they vary from it: it will appear, that the most Learned Christians, even Romanists as well as Protestants; though a man would think, less concerned otherwise, as they that ascribe so much to the Church and Pope; and because of the authority they ascribe to the vulgar Latine; but even they, as well as Protestants; and among them, some so well qualified to judge of the case, as no men can well be presumed to have been more since, if so much; have maintained the authentickness of the Hebrew, not the Hebrew that was, as some would seek to evade, and would have us to believe; but of that Hebrew which is now, (the same that ever was) and is transmitted unto us by the Massoreth Jews, as the true and only Text, which hath always been authentick. I will name some Romanists, and among them, him first, then whom I think, for his knowledge of these things, particularly; besides exquisite judgement, Learning and Piety, generally; to either Papists or Protestants, none



more considerable; and that is *Andreas Masius*: whose Commentary upon *Ioshua*, where he doth fully express his opinion concerning the *Septuagint* (so called) and the Hebrew, now extant; is so generally and deservedly commended. To him I shall add *Stenchus Engubinus*, a man of great Learning and Fame; *Genebrard*, a furious man against Protestants, but for his abilities in that kind of Learning, a very competent Judge otherwise; and for many years professor of the Hebrew tongue. And lastly, (I name none, but such as I have at present by me:) *Bellarmino*; who for his skill in the tongues, though not comparable to any of the former; yet for his fame and credit, and authority, and peremptory round dealing in the business, well deserveth a name among them, who have maintained the credit, and authentickness of the Hebrew Text, now extant against the *Septuagint*, or that translation, which is ascribed to them.

But how *Bellarmino* and others, (this by the way only: we shall not be long upon it) will or can reconcile this with their opinion of the authentickness of the vulgar Latine Edition, which doth so notably vary from the Hebrew in many places; let them look to that who think themselves concerned. That both he and *Genebrard*, to uphold the credit of their vulgar, (of the Greek also, *Genebrard* especially, which he would have authentick in the *Psalms*, and in the *Psalms* only:) do offer great violence

lence to the Hebrew Text in many places, may be apparent to any man that hath but eyes in his head, (some knowledge, I mean, of the original Hebrew) and will, or dares makes use of them. A wonderful thing it is to see what shift some Learned men of that side, are put to upon that account. Learned *Pererius* on *Genesis*, de *discrepantiâ Lectionis Latine ab Hebraicâ*, &c. proposes the Question, *cum utraque Lectio* &c. that is, *When both readings cannot be true or well reconciled; the Question is, which must be thought vicious and false; and which to be preferred.* To condemn the Latine of that particular place, he is there upon; he doth give some reason why he cannot; the consent of all Latine and Greek Interpreters and Commentators: on the other side, to reject the Hebrew, besides the authority of the Chaldee Paraphrase which doth agree with it; he doth profess that *St. Augustines* judgement concerning the authority of the Hebrew Text, (*me vehementer deterret*) did mightily deterre him: whose words are, as he doth produce them: *Recte fieri nullo modo dubitaverim, ut cum diversum aliquid in utrisq; codicibus invenitur,* (he doth interpose; *loquitur ibi*, &c, that is, *Augustine in that place, speaks of the Hebrew and Greek Bibles, or Copies particularly: but, idem de Latinis*, &c. that is, it seems to me reasonable we should think the same of the Latine too:) *quandoquidem ad fidem rerum gestarum utrumque esse non potest verum; ei Lingue potius credatur, unde est in aliam per interpretes facta*

*facta translatio*. Yet when he comes to a conclusion; in case no way can be found, saith he, to reconcile them, (the Latine and the Hebrew) *standum potius Latina, quam Hebraea*. Why so? *quippe cum illa concilii Tridentini auctoritate tanto=perè commendata, & communita sit*. So a late Writer of that side, though he had said before; *dicendum potius videtur, cum Chrysostomo, Hilario, Irenao, Tertulliano, & aliis gravissimis Scriptoribus, & Ecclesia patribus, Hebraicam versionem* (so he calls it, how properly I will not examine: ) *etiam nunc apud nos extare, prout a Moyse & antiquis olim Prophetis conscripta fuit*; (what Protestant did ever say more? yet at last he concludeth, *Cum Hebraei & Graeci Codices eam non habeant approbationem Ecclesia; quam habent Latini vulgati, — huic semper ita haerendum, &c.* and quotes Bellarmine for his warrant. Yet Bellarmine in his 2 *De verbo Dei*. cap. 10. doth seem to speak very moderately, as though the Council of Trent intended no such thing, to prefer, or equal the Latine vulgar, to the original Hebrew or Greek; but only to authorize it above other Translations: but he that shall well weigh the following Chapter, *Solvuntur objectiones, &c.* will find it much otherwise; for there indeed, he doth acknowledge, that the *Fontes* are to be followed before the Channels or Rivulets, in case they be not troubled or corrupted; and that this is the case of the Originals of the Bible: he would make us believe he hath proved, and doth endeavour



to give some reasons, that Truth, as well of Texts as Faith, is now become the sole Inheritance or Patrimony of the Laws : and though, saith he, we do not affirm, that our Latine Interpreter was a Prophet, or infallible : *non potuisse errare tamen dicimus, illum non errasse in ea versione, quam Ecclesia approbavit.* which in plain English, as I conceive, would be this : Though we do not say, or maintain, that the Author of the Latine vulgar was other then a man, and might not erre ; yet now since the Church hath approved, or made him authentick, we say and maintain, that he is Authentick and did not erre. Yet for all this, some have taken great pains ( in favour to the Hebrew now extant ; doubtless, though they dare not openly profess it : ) to remove this scruple or objection of the Tridentine Councils authority, in making the vulgar Latine Authentick, who plainly tell us, and prove it by good reasons, and authority, that the intention of the Council was not absolutely, ( *infinite* ) to make the vulgar Authentique ; but *finite*, and *restrictè* ; or as others express it, *comparativè* onely : that is, of all Translations the most Authentick. Serrarius the Jesuit, among others in his *Prolegomena Biblica*, hath taken great pains upon that subject, in his 19th Chapter. *Quæst. 10. An Vulgata huic editioni a Tridentino concilio, recte authoritas tributa ? Q. 11. Quanta vulgatæ versioni nostræ a Tridentino concilio tributa Authoritas . and Q. 12. An Hebrais, Græcisque fontibus a Tridentino concilio anteposita sit vulgata*

*vulgata Latina nostra editio* ? the same *Serrarius* in the same *Prolegomena*, doth take upon him to prove, that no change, by any wilful acting of the Jews, hath happened before Christ, nor since Christ, for the first Five hundred years, as long as *St Jerome* lived : nor after the said Five hundred first years, after Christ compleat, to his time, when himself (*Serrarius*) did write. But from *St Jeromes* time, to the end of the said first Five hundred years after Christ, in that time, that something hath been wilfully altered by the Jews, as occasion offered it self, he doth assert ; but that something, as he doth there argue it ; doth in very deed, when well considered of and examined ; come to so little, that it may appear, it was rather because he thought he must say somewhat to prevent offence, then because he intended to make any thing of it seriously ; especially, if we consider what he doth there maintain, *posse, si parum attendatur, & modeste res agatur, &c.* that is,, if men would consider of it with due moderation, all parties might be reconciled and agreed ; so that neither the Jews, from Christians, nor Hereticks (so we must be called who will not profess to beleieve which I dare say, because I have sufficiently proved it, as I conceive elsewhere ; few, very few of them besides the ignorant vulgar, do seriously beleieve ; that their Church is without errors, and their Pope *Infallible* : ) from Catholicks, nor Catholicks among themselves, would be found to disagree in this point. It seems then, by his confession, that what Jews and Prote-

Protestants write of the integrity of the Hebrew, now extant, comes very near to the truth; which is much, that in so material a point, so much is granted: what pity it is, that he durst not express himself more plainly?

But it is not the vulgar Latine, that we have to do with here, though accidentally so much hath been said of it; but the Greek Translation, commonly ascribed to the *Septuagint*. We have heard others, for Learning and Reputation among the Romanists, inferior to none: let us hear what *Lucas Brugensis* thought of it, and I think we shall need to seek no farther. *Quæritur* (saith he in a place of his Annotations in *Quarto*, on *Genesis*; Printed by *Christopher Plantine*, A. D. 1580.) *utri sequendi sint*, &c. that is; *Tis a question, which are to be followed the Hebrew or Greek Copies; for they seem to be repugnant one to another: many make no scruple to exclaim, that the Hebrew Copies which are now extant, &c. What, shall not the Greek Copies, which all the Fathers follow be preferred? but I would gladly put a question to those men; Shall the Hebrew Copies be rejected, which no Fathers do reject? for the Fathers following the Edition of the Septuagint, then commonly received, either did not consult the Hebrew; or if they did, they did not reject it. And in the Margent he adds; Dr, Melchior Chanus: l. 2 c. 13. hath gathered many testimonies of the Fathers; so Lucas Brugensis; I thought I had done, but Learned Ribera, whom I have yet also, must not be omitted.*



omitted. The Vulgar indeed, is all in all with him; so zealous was he for the authority of the Council of *Trent*, as he understood it; but what reckoning he made of the *Septuagint*, may appear by what he writes on the 9th of *Hosea*, Paragraph 19. if the Reader will take so much pains.

Of Protestants, I shall name none, because it hath been the constant opinion of all Protestants (of best worth and reputation in the world, I am sure :) generally, till of late; and it cannot be denyed, but among them, there have been divers of exquisite abilities in all kinds; and in this kind, particularly; and therefore very competent Judges in this matter, and whose judgement, in the judgement of all sober men, who seek after truth more then novelties; would be much regarded and esteemed. And I would put it to the consideration of sober Christians, whether, if what hath passed for a certain truth for so long, among so many Learned Romanists and Protestants; so well qualified to judge of the business, should now without some kind of *Divine Revelation* to the contrary, upon the credit and authority of some men (of whom, more by and by :) be lightly deserted, as a cheat, or great mistake; whether, I say, it would not give men just occasion to doubt, that it may prove so in time, of many other things or points of Religion, that are generally beleaved and received.

But

But now let us consider who they are, that have lately with much labour and noise opposed this received truth, of the integrity and Divine authority of the Hebrew Text, or Bible as now extant; to ascribe it to the Greek Translation: I do not take upon me, to give an account of all that have dissented within these 100 or 200 years since the restoration of Learning, by the knowledge of tongues; but of such who have lately appeared, I will give the first place to *Morinus*, (though both in his later *Opuscula*; and in his *Diatriba Elenctica*, before he would have us think he is much wronged by them that lay it to his charge, either that he ever made the *Septuagint* now extant, *Authentic*, or denied the Hebrew to be so;) a man of great and various Learning, I deny it not; but a confident ambitious man, and a great boaster (I speak of him by his writings, not by fame or prejudice) and in that respect, not so competent a Judge, wise men will consider; but whether so or no, there is no need of this plea, Gods truth (and blessed be God for it) hath not wanted an able Champion even among them, that live in the communion of the Roman Church: such a Champion, who without boasting or bragging (and in that, very unlike *Morinus*;) hath so Learnedly and Solidly refuted him, as I think no man that is not sworn to that cause, will require more ample satisfaction, according to the approbation of some Doctors of the *Sorbone* there to be seen; *ut de sacrosancta editionis Hebraica Authentica*

*Authentica veritate, nullus possit in posterum, in vitis etiam eius obrectatoribus, amplius dubitare.* Since *Morinus*, some have appeared in the same cause: yet with this moderation, though they ascribe much to the Greek, they give the pre-eminence to the Hebrew still, above all translations, and speak of it as *Authentick* reverently. So the Learned late Bishop, to whom we owe that admirable and incomparable late Edition of the Bible; a work, the onely, I know, that would make us think the better of those sad times that produced it. And so Learned *Capellus* in his *Critica sacra*, though justly censured as by many others, so particularly by Learned Ingenious *Du Muis* (whose exceptions against it, are to be found in the said *Critica Sacra*;) to be of dangerous consequence, and not a little prejudicial to the Hebrew Text; yet still doth acknowledge this preminence; and how little reckoning he made of the *Septuagint*, in comparison of it, he doth declare more then once: as *l. 6, c. 3.* where he doth set it out as a singular providence of God: *Quod non passus est ulla vel hominum fraude, vel vi &c. nulla veterum translationum parem Dei erga se curam & providentiam experta est:* saith he, none of the Old Translations have found that care and providence towards them; for either they are quite lost, (so *Aquila's*, &c.) or miserably corrupted (*miserè corrupta atque fadata*) and defiled as the Greek *Septuagint* of the Old Testament, which we have at this day. And of the Hebrew again a little after; *Imo vero stupenda potius ac plane admiranda*



da Dei erga fontes illos cura & providentia in hoc fit manifesta, quod a Moyse ad hac usque tempora per tot saeculorum multiplices periodos, tam puri tam sinceri, atque incorrupti pervenerint, &c. If any Protestants have gone further, I would rather name them upon any other occasion, being men otherwise of singular Learning, whereof they have given good testimony to the world in several kinds; but in this controversy, as I conceive, so far as hath appeared unto me hitherto, not so well versed: and because I find an Epistle of Learned *Valesius*, to the late Reverend, and Learned Archbishop of *Armagh*, cited by some, as though much were to be found in it for that opinion, which they favour: I think that Epistle doth much confirm the comon opinion of Protestants, which we do here maintain; for though the subject of it be *De Septuaginta interpretibus*, and that it treats of several particulars concerning the *Septuagint*, and their Translation in opposition to the Archbishops opinion; (which we have nothing to do with at this time:) yet, as to the main business; what credit this Translation now in point of integrity, and in comparison of the Hebrew Text, doth deserve, I find, nothing at all, but by that high commendation that Learnman doth give to *Andr. Masius* in that Epistle (*Andreas Masius, cujus judicio & eruditioni plurimum tribuo, in Praefationem, &c.*) and *Andreas Masius vir excellenti ingenio & judicio praeclitus, in erudita illa praefatione, &c.* I do rather suspect he was of the same opinion *Masius* was, and  
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doth declare in that excellent Preface, mentioned by *Valesius*, concerning the *Septuagint*, that it is a most absurd and ridiculous Translation, as now extant; (though in some places excellent:) which I think was the thing the Learned Archbishop chiefly aimed at, in his *Syntagma*. But let me add, though I will not take upon me to maintain whatsoever hath been asserted by that Learned Arch-bishop in that book, as that this Greek Translation we now have, or ever since Christ hath been under that name; hath nothing at all, (though *Genebrard* in his Preface, or Dedicatory Epistle to Pope Gregory the XIII. *De istius corruptela, labisque causa*, &c. the *Psalms* of *David* onely excepted, saith little less:) of the true original *Septuagint*, which he would have quite lost long before that, and the like: yet I am confident, any man of judgement, and not preoccupied with prejudice, who reads but his Epistle *ad Capellum*, will think himself sufficiently satisfied and convinced, that the LXX Interpreters (the main thing *Capellus* driveth at) did not use an Hebrew Text or Copy, different from that now extant; but that their variations from this now extant, happened meerly, either through mistake; (a great part confessed by *Capellus* himself:) or wilful, and intended innovation: which thing granted as to the cause it self we maintain, we have as much as we desire. And as for the *Samaritane* Copy we have, since that it is acknowledged by the Patrons of it, wilfully corrupted and adulterated

rated in some places, as notoriously, *Dent.* 27.4. where for *Ebal*, to countenance their error and Apostacy from the Jews; they have substituted *Garifim*; besides so many notable transpositions and additions, and the like; I think the Archbishops opinion of it deserved a better censure, then to be stiled (not by *Valesius*) *febricitantis somnia*: who though as a man, notwithstanding his admirable wit and learning, acknowledged by all men, he might err sometimes; yet not so err, certainly without any ground of reason or probability, as that his error or opinion should be liable (deservedly) to such a censure.

Now all this considered, whether *St Augustine* had any reason to make such a providence of it, that God did so miraculously preserve the Jews in all nations, whether they were dispersed and scattered, a distinct nation, to the end (amongst other ends: they might bear a Testimony (which they do most effectually in all places:) to those Scriptures on which the Christian Religion is chiefly grounded; let the Reader that will take the pains to consider well of it, judge: and if it were such a singular providence then, as *St Augustine* doth make of it some 4 or 500 years after Christ; what is it now, a 1000 years and above since *St Augustine*; especially, when it shall be considered, that the Jews (moved by God certainly;) did soon after *St Augustines* time, devise, or rather perfect, for it was begun long before Christ,) an Art,



the like whereof was never devised, or thought of before; when yet we know what pains ancient Criticks and Grammarians did take, for the preservation, (who indeed was to them generally as their Bible;) of *Homer*. But such an Art, whereby the Hebrew Text might become inviolable, and not subject to any alteration, but might quickly be found out, and amended. Which made *Serrarius* the Jesuit (as we heard before) peremptorily to conclude; *nihil in eodem Hebræo textu malitiose ab iisdem Judæis mutatum, hisce Domini Annis, amplius mille & centum*. For, saith he, about that time (500 years after Christ) lived the *Massoreths*, who by an incredible diligence did so contrive it, that nothing through malice, (or otherwise, he might have added; for it is the same reason:) could be taken away, or changed in their books, which they accounted Canonical. And as he, so other Learned Christians, generally Protestants and others have judged of it; admiring the invention, and acknowledging Gods great providence in it, of late indeed: but before I proceed farther, into that enquiry, which well deserves to be taken into consideration; and will require some time; I cannot but observe another providence of God of the same nature; or rather indeed, a further degree of the same providence but by a different instrument or people, by which *St Augustines* observation is much confirmed and *Incredulity* further confuted and confounded.

What

What are the *Mahometans* (in the compounding of whose Religion, a Jew did contribute much) at this day, and have been these many ages, but professed enemies to Christians and Christianity? greater then the Jews, I cannot say, but much more considerable for their power and number; and for their temporal success in their wars, (the great and only argument of truth, during the late rebellion:) beyond any people (some apparently miraculous victories of the Israelites recorded in the Scriptures, excepted :) beyond any people, I say, that ever were, to be admired. Is it not then a providence, yea a singular providence of God (their miraculous encrease considered) that even these in their sacred records, as they account them, should bear such a testimony to Christ, and the Christian faith? I do not say, to every article of the Christian faith, which would be an unreasonable, if not impossible supposition, in such apparent external opposition, and contrariety: but to Christ himself, and some principal Articles of the Christian faith, enough to make any miscreant, (professing outwardly Christianity) to blush; would God be so gracious to such unworthy wretches, as most of them by their lives and actions appear to be; as to give them so much Grace, that they could blush, or be sensible of their lewdness, and *incredulity*. Yet that is not that, I chiefly aim at, to enquire what they say of Christ, or any other article of our faith; but what they say of our *Scriptures*, Old or New

Testament upon which our faith is grounded, which hath much affinity with *St Augustines* observation of the Jews. But let us hear though, and thereby another observation of *St Augustines*; or rather *prophecy*; (for he lived long before *Mahomet* or his *Alcoran* were heard of in the world;) will be much confirmed. What is it then, that they, or their *Alcoran* faith of Christ? I have no *Alcoran* at this time by me, but one in *Arabick*; imperfect and much defaced by Sea-water. But I do not pretend to so much skill in the Tongue, though God be thanked, by the industry of Learned men, made so easie (to what it was, when I was a boy, or younger man, and fiercely then set upon it:) that a little pains will go a great way in it. However, I dare give such an account to the Reader, which I dare warrant true, and impartial, which is more then I can say of all that have written of this subject. It is certain that the *Alcoran* doth acknowledge Christ the promised *Messias*, born of the Virgin *Mary*; by the power of God: the same Christ there also stiled, *the Word, and the Soul, and the Spirit of God*. Upon these Titles or Names some have inferred a Trinity, as acknowledged, though not expressly by them; but wrongfully, since it is that which they professedly disclaim, and charge the Christians with as greatest impiety. However, true it is, that what they write against the *Trinity*, professedly; is upon a false ground for the most part; as if by it, more Gods then one were set up; and therefore doth not much concern



concern the Christians, properly. But of Christ and the Virgin *Mary*, the *Alcoran* never speaks, but with respect and honour; and I have read of some, who by their Laws have been severely punished for speaking otherwise, (which is to the shame of Christianity and Christian Magistrates; by wicked Oaths and Curses, wherewith every street doth ring; and otherwise too sometimes, by open blasphemies, tolerated among too many Christians :) against either. But whether the *Alcoran* doth acknowledge Christ *the Son of God*, and upon that or any other account, God; all reports do not agree. There is a *Dialogue* extant in *Arabick*, printed at *Rome*, as I take it, between two Mahumetans, as the Title doth bear, and most seem to believe; which hath been translated into English by Mr. *Bedwel*, very skilful in the Tongue;) printed in *London*, *An. Dom.* 1615. which Translation I have, corrected by Learned *Bochartus* with his own hand in many places. There indeed we have, partly out of the *Alcoran*, if truly quoted; and partly, by necessary consequences and deductions out of it; of Christ, his being the eternal Son of God; of the Trinity, and other mysteries of Religion, as much as can be desired. But whereas the whole drift of the Book tends to this, to prove that *Mahomet* was a lewd impostor; his *Alcoran* full of Fables and Lies; the Gospel and the Old Testament, the true saving word of God; and all this, not only argued, but fully and clearly concluded and asserted; that this should

be conceived to have proceeded from real Mahometans, I cannot but admire. And whereas the Learned Prefacer (the first it may be, but not the onely now of that strange opinion :) doth object, that though many things, or speeches there, may be thought too good to come from the breast of an Heathen, Turk, or Saracen; yet many also scarce good enough to be fathered upon a well grounded Christian: I do profess, that I have not met with any such, but might well in my judgement, proceed from a sound true Christian; the first design of the work, which was under the name or pretence of Mahometans, to draw or entice very Turks or Mahometans to the reading of it, which did oblige the Author to speak of the *Alcoran*, at first especially, with respect; as also of *Mahomet*, in the usual form of Mahometan writers; this excepted, I know not what may be objected: somewhat I remember in the praises of *Virginity* somewhere, that may be thought very high and somewhat extravagant, but not sufficient to bring a man into suspicion; but with them only that never read what hath been written by some Ancients about it. Some, where also the name of *David* for *St Paul*; but how ordinary such mistakes are, either of false Copies or Memories in Authors, who can be ignorant that hath any knowledge of Books? some where also as I remember, it is said, the Moon is bigger then the Earth: no great mistake in point of Christianity, this, I hope; nor so great in point of Astronomy as theirs, who denied

denied the *Antipodes*, Men and Christians of good worth and credit in the world, as is well known: as for the time or age when the Authors lived or wrote; it is said in the same Preface, that the Author himself doth seem to intimate about 600 years since: (now 50 years more:) I do not remember any such passage; but I remember well another passage, by which it may certainly enough be gathered, that *Constantinople* was in the hands of the Turks, not Christians, when it was written, which will not amount to much more then 200 years: I shall therefore decline to take any proofs or testimonies out of that Book, which may be supposed, as partial; though I think most of them, if well considered of, may be found true enough. I shall give one instance; A Learned man of very great knowledge and proficiency in those Books and Languages, hath set out a Treatise, Entituled, *Compendium Historicum eorum quæ Mahumedani de Christo, &c. Eugd. Batav. 1643.* there he tells us, the Mahometans do not acknowledge Christ the Son of God, and that they make him *nudum hominem*; a bare man, as other men are; and the *Alcoran* accordingly. This may be thought, but that the rest of the book doth make amends, somewhat partially related: and *L' Empereur*, his Letter prefixed to the Treatise, doth give some ground to doubt, that he was not altogether satisfied; the Authour had acquitted himself so well as he might, or ought to have done. But I make no question atall, either of the good intention,  
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or sufficient ability of the Author: however, I must say, he might have done well to have told his Reader, that the *Alcoran*, as written by such a man (altogether illiterate and *Enthusiast*, &c.) hath many contradictions, which have been observed by more then one: and in this particular, how can it be said, they make Christ, but *nudum hominem*, a meer man, whom yet they acknowledge (as acknowledged by the Author of this Treatise) to have been so miraculously begotten, and to have proceeded from God, as *Verbum*, *Spiritus*, and *Animam Dei*? I know they say he is not, in express words, in opposition to Christians, *Filius Dei*, the Son of God. But whether those Titles (besides his miraculous birth, as set out in the *Alcoran*) be not enough, in point of reason, to entitle him to such a relation, would have been considered. True it is, that God cannot *generare* as man doth, and be God: as we are told by Mahumetans in the same Treatise. So saith *Plutarch* too, as afterwards we shall see; yet the same *Plutarch* doth tell of other ways, how God, if he please, may be a Father very really; and yet God, nevertheless. No question therefore I think, but the *Alcoran*, and other Mahumetans, however they contradict in words, acknowledge enough of Christ, to make him in point of reason, or rational consequence, in very deed, the Son of God, begotten of God (in a mysterious incomprehensible way: ) and born of the Virgin *Mary*: but indeed of his *Eternal generation*, as the Second Person of the Trinity,

Trinity, I read nothing out of any Mahumetan writers, and what is brought by some to that end, is but by remote forced consequences, as I conceive.

But the main business we proposed to our selves, is to know what the *Alcoran* saith, or testifieth concerning the *Scriptures*, of either Old or New Testament. That both were Divine, and came from God, is fully and clearly acknowledged, which is as much as we can require. For, as for that exception, that they have been since altered by Christians, of purpose; so altered, as to contain a Doctrine different from what they first contained; there being so much to be said in point of ordinary sense and reason, for the truth and sincerity of either in point of Doctrine, or material circumstances, and relations; so much to be said, and hath been said as by others, so by some upon this very subject against the *Alcoran* and other Mahumetans; I can say no less, but that he must be a very brute, even like *Mahumet* himself, who can entertain any such objection against the *Scriptures*, as at all considerable. Indeed if men, because they would gladly have it so, (their wicked licentious lives engaging them, for the most part:) that *Epicurus* was in the right; that there is no God, or if a God, not such a God as doth take any care of the world; or if they grant so much, because they would not be thought Atheists; that however, they are not bound to beleieve the Gospel is true; that the  
souls

souls of men are immortal ; that there is an Hell or a Paradise, and will be a day of judgement &c. If men I say, because they would gladly have it so, are willing to hear any objections, but not willing to take the pains to read answers, and to search, if need be, into the very bottom of specious pretences and allegations ; I know no remedy against that, but they may be Atheists if they please ; or whatever they have more mind to, and may fit their humors and worldly purposes better ; ( which is now generally the humour of the times : ) but that I think it is the part of every good Christian, to pity such wretches, who might have been thought happy, if they had been born arrant brutes indeed, as Dogs or Swine, and had had no interest in another world ; to pity them, and to pray for them, that God will open their eyes, that they may know their condition, and be sensible of it, before it be too late. But to our purpose ; many pregnant passages are alledged by divers out of the *Alcoran*, acknowledging the authority of the Scriptures, both Old and New Testament : but especially, by the Author of the *Dialogues* before mentioned ; who also doth often insist on a passage of the *Alcoran*, he saith ; to wit, that the *Alcoran* or *Mahomet's* Law, should be interpreted by the Law and Gospel ; but I do not know what to think of it : I have a Book set out by that Learned Linguist, who first set out the *Syriack* Translation of the Greek Testament, the ancientest we have, and made, if not by any Apostle, yet  
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in their time, and by men Apostolical, most men are of opinion: (a great confirmation of the truth and integrity of the original Greek, exactly agreeing with it, for the most part:) *Joh. Albertus Wedmestadius*, (by whom a translation of the *Alcoran*, made by him, is promised; but whether ever Printed, I know not:) *A.D. 1543*. Entituled, *Epitome Alcorani*, which Book it seems is of great authority with them: in that Book I find among other things, *Christum, Mariae filium, cui commissum Evangelium, quod est lumen, confirmatio Testamenti, & castigatio, & recta via timentibus Deum, ad vestra Legis Complementum* Sect. 29. which doth come somewhat near: and again, (God speaking, or made to speak, as before:) *librum Moysi dedimus, quem qui sequitur Deo penitus conjungetur* Sect. 67. *Evangelium appellat librum lucidum* Sect. 68. There also concerning Christ and the Virgin Mary; *omnium mulierum optima, ab omnibus intacta virgini, nostram animam insufflavimus, & illam, filiumque suum manifestum miraculum fecimus.* Sect. 55. There also, *omnis recte vivens, id est, Deum adorans, bonique operator, sive Judaeus, sive sit Christianus, seu Lege sua relicta ad aliam tendat, procul dubio Divinum amorem consequetur.* I find also in *Historia Saracenica*, prepared by *Erpenius*, but after his death published by *Golinius*; Latin and Arabick, a Book of great Credit and Trust, for the truth of his relations; written by a Christian, but a Christian that was of great credit with Mahometan Princes, and admitted by them

them, for the opinion they had of his abilities, to be a Secretary; a man therefore, who may probably be supposed, and indeed generally beleeved, to have been very careful and wary, what he did write: In him I find to the same purpose, thus expressed in Latine: *jussit quoque credere veritatem Prophetarum, &c.* that is, He also (to wit Mahomet) bid them beleeve the truth of the Prophets and the Apostles, and of their writings; as also that Christ the Son of Mary, is the Spirit of God, and his Word, and his Apostle; and approved the Gospel and Mosaical Law: of the Edition in folio p. 3. Of his good affection to the Christians also, there is more there, p. 11. and that he should say (which is attested by others also:) *whosoever killeth a Christian, he should find him an adversary at the day of judgment, and he that wrongeth a Christian, wrongeth me.* To conclude upon what we aimed at: he that doth not acknowledge a great providence for the better confirmation of the Christian Religion; confusion and inexcusableness of such infidels, as still doubt, and waver; that God should so provide, that the greatest enemies Christianity hath in the world, Jews and Mahometans, should yet bear witness to those writings, which are the foundation of the Christian faith: he that doth not, what can we think of him; or he of himself, if God shall ever be so gracious unto him, to give him grace, soberly and seriously to think of it? there is somewhat in that too, that they still speak so honourably of Christ (I might add, of the Virgin

gin *Mary* too; but upon another consideration: ) according to that excellent observation: (I called it a *Prophecy* before:) of *St Augustines*: *Per omnes gentes Ecclesia sic diffusa succrevit, ut etiam contra ipsam Catholicam fidem nulla secta perversa, nullum genus exoriatur erroris, quod ita reperiatur Christiana veritati adversari, ut non affectet atque ambiat, Christi nomine gloriar: quod quidem non sineretur pullulare per terram, nisi exerceret (fortasse, assereret) sanam & ipsa contradictio Disciplinam: (id est, doctrinam.)* And if any weaker Christian be scandalized at the success of this false Prophet, and his successors in their wars, which hath begot this great Empire, in succession of time, now devolved to the Turks; let them remember that they were *Ishmaelites*, as they call themselves of *Ismael*, the Son of *Abraham*, to whom God had promised (and that promise often repeated: ) that in him (*Abraham*) all nations and families of the earth should be blessed; and of *Ismael* his Son, particularly; that he should bless him, (with temporal blessings, reserving Spiritual to *Isaac* his Son, and of *Sarah* his wife:) so that he should multiply exceedingly, and become a great nation, and beget many Princes: the fulfilling whereof, in so notable a manner, as we have seen, (they still glorying in it, that they are of the posterity of *Abraham*, by *Ismael*; and right *Hagarens*, by their Mother *Hagar*, whom they are not ashamed to own, as by Learned Mr. *Pocock* is attested, though commonly called *Hagarens* upon another account,



count, he will tell you : ) should be no small confirmation of the truth of the Scriptures.

Now to return ; of late indeed another kind of language hath been used concerning them, (the *Masoreths* before spoken of) but upon what grounds of reason, let the Reader judge. Now whereas some men upon the same account of Gods providence, would infer a necessity of the Hebrew Points, or Vowels to be as antient as the Consonants, as without which nothing could be certain in the Hebrew Text or Bible ; and many through ignorance of the tongue, judging of the matter, by what they know of other tongues, as Greek and Latine, and the like ; may be induced to believe that it must be so ; that is, that if the antient Hebrew Text before the *Masoreths*, had no Points, such as we have at this day, or Vowels ; there could be no certainty of the sense ; I shall not take upon me to decide, or so much as dispute the business, whether it be so or no, that the Points were antiently, or whether of a later date ; concerning which, so much hath been written by very Learned men, by some to prove their antiquity, by others to evince the contrary : I shall only tell them, who are altogether ignorant of the tongue, and therefore more likely to be scandalized at the business ; that to judge of it by other tongues, as Latine or Greek, would be a very great mistake ; since it is well known, and may easily be demonstrated, even to them that are most ignorant ; that such is the *Genius* of the

the tongue, and those other Oriental tongues, that have any affinity with it, and are supposed to have proceeded from it: that they may be written and read without any such Points or Vowels; as well without them, generally, as with them. Written and read, I say, not without Vowels absolutely, without which no words can be *pronounced* articulately; but without any such Vowels *written* or added to words, but supplied, (though not always, perchance, according to the exact rules of *punctuation*, except the Reader be a perfect Hebrician:) by the Reader. For, to give an instance; Give an Hebrew Bible that hath no pricks, to a man that hath some knowledge of the tongue; that hath read the Bible over once or twice; he will read as currently (especially, in the historical part, where there is less difficulty,) without, as another shall in a Bible that hath them. But if any man attempt the same in a Greek or Latine Bible, to read without Vowels (except he know by heart what he is to read) he will find it quite another thing: sooner shall an ordinary Hebrician read ten leaves of ordinary Hebrew, then a very good Latinist or Grecian three lines or three words in either Language without Vowels. How much more easily will he read without pricks; he that is a natural Jew, or who doth by study perfectly understand the Language? hence also it doth proceed, that the Learned Jews (that is, such who are bred to the knowledge of the tongue from their infancy, which many are not, but

are altogether strangers to it, knowing no other tongue but the vulgar tongue of the Countrey where they are born : ) in ordinary communication, by mutual Letters, use no such Pricks, as needles and superfluous : no not in their ordinary Contracts or Instruments, which they think as clear and certain, as if otherwise written or made : a clear evidence, that it is the *genius* and property of the said tongue, not to need Points or Vowels. Wherein this property doth chiefly consist ; Learned *Capellus* will tell them that desire to know. One particular is, that there is no Hebrew word, or Syllable, without a Consonant, which cannot be said of other languages ; so that if a man would write any other Language, as the Hebrew is ordinarily written without Points or Vowels ; he must leave out whole words as for example, in the Greek, *α, ει, ι, ο* : in Latine *eo, aueo, &c.* in French, *ean, &c.* in English, *I, you, eye,* and the like : ) without which, no sense can be made of the rest ; when therefore they tell men, who are the Advocates of this cause ; that the Vowels are as the *soul of Letters and Reading*, and the like ; though it be very true of ordinary Languages ; how impertinent is it of the Hebrew ? how then came so many vast volumes in Hebrew and Arabick, and other like tongues, daily to be read and understood without Vowels : when three lines so written in any other tongue, would prove an inextricable business ? What shall we say of the *Talmud*, that doth consist of so many tomes ; what makes it difficult



ficult? not the want of Vowels or such pointing as we speak of; but the mixture of so many other Languages, and frequent abbreviations; which they that are acquainted with, would look upon Vowels with scorn, as a good swimmer would look upon one with bladders, or bags about him for fear of sinking; or a good rider upon a man that were tied to his horse for fear he should fall. And this, Learned Hebricians when their zeal in, and for this cause, doth not transport them; can acknowledge freely enough; as Learned *Buxtorfius* in his *Epistola Hebraica*, excusing himself, that he had set out some with Vowels; *puncta vocalia addere* (saith he) *plus tædii, quam laboris attulit, ut & supervacuum videri possit iis, qui paululum a vestibulo versus penetralia hujus linguae progressi sunt. Sed tantum ut tyronibus, &c.* Can all other Hebrew (Chaldee, Syriack, Arabick :) be read without Vowels, and they accounted *Tyrones* onely; *beginners* or *apprentices* in those tongues that want them; and the Hebrew Bible (the easiest of all Books, but where the matter it self is abstruse :) a dead Letter wanting life, soul and spirit without them? a groundless therefore and superstitious jealousie certainly. I wish it were as harmless as it is groundless: but the danger is, that when men, who for want of skill in the Hebrew (the case of too many, God knows; the more the pity :) cannot judge of these things; or judge of them by other Languages; and meet with the clamors of some whom they think Pious and Learned; that, if the Hebrew had

no Vowels at the first, all is lost, and we have no certainty of the sense of the Bible, or Hebrew Text; and on the other side shall consider, that besides such probable (that I say no more) argumenters, as are alledged to prove, that it is a late invention; (long after Christ I mean:) it is the opinion of so many Learned and Pious Protestants, (is at this day, and hath always been:) that it is so, whose judgements and peremptory declarations about it are very obvious: how likely may such a difference of judgements in so weighty a business, bring him or them to doubt of all the rest, and so to plain Atheism (in these sad times, especially,) by degrees? certainly, greater advantage cannot be given either to Papists, as many of them, who in favour to the Vulgar Translation, (God be thanked, they are not all of that mind:) or to advance the authority of the Pope and Church, are glad of any occasion to detract from the authority, or authentickness of the Hebrew Testament; or to Atheists, who acknowledge no Scriptures at all to be Divine, then to hear men so simply to despise, and madly to declaim against the Sacred Hebrew Text; that is not pointed; which they know, (to wit, that these points are of a late invention, since *St Jeromes* time:) is the opinion of most Learned Protestants, as well as Papists: even of those, who very lately have taken good pains (as *Antonius Hulsius*, the Professor of *Hague*, for one:) to maintain against all late attempts, the authentickness of the Hebrew, as now extant. Such is  
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the danger of unadvised zeal, that even when it thinks to promote Truth, it doth most wound it: As when that late Learned champion of their Antiquity, to make his opinion more plausible, doth not stick to say, that he finds it much more easie to read the Rabbins without points, (such points as are now in use:) though never read or seen by him before; then any Book of the Bible, though pointed and read by him over and over more then once. A strange speech indeed, to set out the obscurity of the Bible above all Books that ever were written: whereas others in this very case and cause, tell us, if the Bible be not easie to be read, (that is say they, pointed:) by ordinary men; Gods providence hath been much wanting to mankind in that particular. But I doubt I shall not be believed, (so prodigiously strange they seem to me) without his own words, which are these; *Longe facilius est legere scripta Rabbinica non punctata, quam librum aliquem Biblicum, adeo ut dicere ausim, me hujus rei causa promptius, & certius lecturum aliquem librum Rabbinicum, nunquam antea mihi visum; quam librum Biblicum punctatum, mihi notum, & saepius antea lectum, atque relectum.* what reasons he hath for it, (if reasons they may be called) you may read there. Yet we deny not, but as the want of distinctions by Comma's, &c. and the various signification of words in other languages, may breed some obscurity sometimes, which might have been prevented by such distinctions, and single significations of words: so the want of



such points, sometimes in the Hebrew Text, may breed some obscurity or ambiguity, which may require the industry and labour of Learned Commentators. Which is no ways repugnant to providence, that the word of God in all things absolutely necessary, plain enough; should not be so plain, always to be understood by every man; or so plain every where, as that it should not require, sometimes, the best brains of the most rational and Learned; and yet somewhat reserved for another age. But if that be a sufficient argument, to prove that such points have been from the beginning, because with them, some ambiguities are prevented, to which without them the Text is subject; especially if the Reader be not very skilful: may not we as well argue, that no Greek (especially, of an obscure Author, as *Pindarus* or *Lycophron*;) could be understood when there were no Accents, no distinction of *Spiritus lenis* and *Asper*; which two particulars, what difference they make of sense in very many words, they that have not observed by their own reading, may find at the end of most Greek Dictionaries, an antient collection of such words adscribed by some to *Cyrillus*; by others to *Philoponus*. As for example, *αγυ*⊕ : Accented and Spirited *αγυ*⊕, it signifies *Vitex* a *Willow*: but *αγυ*⊖ (the same Letters) pure: the want of which distinction made *St. Jerome* to mistake, as some Learned men, *Scaliger* on *Eusebius*, and after him, *Vossius* would have it; but it doth not appear so to me, I must confess, he saith no more of it, then ordinary

inary Grammarians have done. However, that neither Accents nor Spirits, were yet then noted, or added to words in *St Jeromes* time, I think very probable. *ἄνθ*, gloria; *ἄνθ* gravis: *ἀκέρης*, a *Physitian*; *ἀκέρης*, a *Taylor*; *ἄπλος*, innavigable; *ἄπλος*, simple, and the like; to which there collected many more, I beleeve may be added. As for example; *ἀλάληθ* (*Rom.* 8.26.) *unspeakable*: *ἀλάληθ*: in *Homer Hesiod*, &c.) *the clamor of soldiers in the field*, or at a *battail*; besides another signification of the same word in *Hesychius*. So *αἰν* *νδθ*, and divers others: then the wants of points and distinctions to Words and Sentences; as *Comma's*, *Colons*, &c. what frequent ambiguity or difference of sense in Authors it may breed, who can be ignorant, that can but read ordinary English or Latine? Now that ancient Books, very ancient, wanted such, is generally acknowledged by all men, and might easily be proved if need were. Of *Aristotle's* time we are sure enough, by himself who doth observe several mistakes of Grammarians and others, in *Homer*, for want of such: but for want of good judgement too; else how could the mistake be found, and peremptorily pronounced a mistake by others, such as *Aristotle* and the like? The ancient copy of the *Septuagint* in our King, (whom God bless and preserve) his Library at *St James*, hath none of all these, neither Accents nor distinctions of Points, as I remember, for I have seen it more then once; but I will not trust my memory. *Scriptus est autem liber, ne sis nescius, literis grandioribus,*

*in vetustissimis membranis, sine ulla capitum, aut vocum distinctione, quod antiquitatis summa indicum est, &c.* are the words of the (once) Learned keeper of it, Mr. Patrick Young, in his Preface to the *Catena* upon *Job*. I remember some 30 or 40 years ago, being in a private house in *Hampshire*; I took notice of the Cover of a book, (some Play-book I think, or the like) which among some others lay in the Hall window; being a parcel of parchment, taken out of some ancient Manuscript Copy of the said *Septuagint* (once probably, an entire book belonging to some publick Library of that Countrey: and either sold or plundered, for such uses, to cover Pamphlets, or for the Goldsmiths:) and it happened to be a piece of the *Psalms*: a brave purchase indeed, had it been a whole Book: but what are Pearls before Swine? I easily obtained that little scrap of parchment from the Master of the house, and have made great reckoning of it, (though I think it will yield me no bread if I wanted it) ever since; it is a kind of Capital Letter, of a strange form, and is not without all distinctions or Accents; but very defective in many words. But of the writing of antient books 1500 or 2000 years ago, no question can be, but that neither Accents or distinctions are to be seen in such. I have indeed four Tragedies of *Ænripides* printed in Capital Letters, out of some choice Manuscript (as I have found by comparing) but where and when Printed I know not; for it hath no Title page, no Preface to the Reader



Reader, nor ever had I beleeeve, for that was the fashion of many Books when Printing first began; But I guess in *Italy*, at *Florence*, probably. There indeed I find distinctions and Accents, which is no wonder if the Manuscript were not above a thousand years old; and yet it is possible, they might be added by them that printed it, or took care to have it printed. I think I may confidently say, which is the thing I aim at: that the Vowels or Hebrew pointing, such as is now used, is not so necessary where the Reader is a competent Hebrician (where, naturally; or by study, perfect; much less:) not so necessary, I say, to prevent ambiguity, or obscurity in the Bible; as distinctions, and accents, are to read Greek Books: yet Greek books have been read and understood, we know, when no such were: and so hath the Old Testament, and may still, (God be thanked) without such pointing, else what will become of so many thousands of books, and among others many Poets (none of the easiest of books commonly to be understood:) in great esteem, written in the Arabick tongue, set out and preserved, and read without any pointing? now as some Protestants strive so eagerly for the antiquity of it, out of a conceit that without it, the Scriptures of the Old Testament would be obscure and uncertain: so some Romanists, who take it for granted that they are of a late invention; they also are for the same conclusion, that without pointing, the same Scriptures are obscure and uncertain: the  
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same conclusion, but out of a contrary mind and interest: Protestants, because they fear it will be so; they, because they would have it so, or at least (whatever themselves think of it:) so beleaved by others, the better to uphold the credit and foul mistakes of some translations; of the Greek especially, which they would have the credit, such is their ambition, to have made authentick.  $\aleph, \beth, \gamma$ , saith *Morinus*, three Hebrew Consonants ( $\underline{d. b. r.}$ ) pointed, or joynd with Vowels, will afford eight several senses or notions: what then shall the poor reader do, when he comes to such a word? I durst undertake, might I be so long upon it, to find hundreds of Greek words that will afford 8, 10, some 20 very different significations, which in ordinary reading, the bare coherence of words (except it be in some few places, perchance:) doth cleer, and no man endowed with common sense, and ordinary judgement (still supposing him to be such an one as understands the language) doth stick at. In the Latine tongue also, *Adrianus Cardinalis, De Sermone Latino*, doth observe no less then 30 or 40 several senses and significations of our Latine word *facio*, as it is joynd with several words; and I beleeve five or six more at least, besides them he doth observe, if it were worth the while, might be found; besides Hebrew words good store, which though they have but one pointing, yet under that one, comprehend sundry different significations; as for example,  $\aleph, \beth, \gamma$ , and the like. The same *Morinus* gives an

an example of three Latine Consonants, *c, r, s*, which with Vowels may be pointed or read Twenty three several ways. Ridiculous man! except he could tell us of any man that will undertake to read ten lines in Latine without Vowels; when he knows that so many books are daily read in Hebrew, readily and currently, by competent Hebricians, without any Vowels, but such as the Hebrew Text, (*ו, י, ה, נ*) here, and there, very sparingly hath had of old, by all which may appear, what a weak argument it is to conclude a necessity of pointing, or setting down the Vowels that belong to every Consonant in Hebrew books, because by it some ambiguities may happily be prevented and why may not another man say, it would help well a weak Hebrician to the understanding of the sense; if every *radical* Consonant in Hebrew words, were printed in a different Character (which, I think, is done in some Bibles) from the *Serviles*; and therefore it ought to be done in all? so indeed I have heard, that Nurses in some Countreys feed young Children, chewing the meat for them which they are to swallow. And why not another, that it had become providence very well, for the satisfaction of men, that the very copy of the Bible, corrected by *Ezra* long ago, had been preserved to this day, as it had been thought by many, to be preserved in some Town of *France*? But the question is not, what every man according to his strength or fancy, may wish, but what hath been done, and must be granted



granted upon grounds, as is alledged of reason and necessity to have been. All this while, I desire the Reader to take notice, that we deny not, (no man doth) but that some Vowels have been added to Hebrew words in the Scripture, antiently, where it was thought convenient; certain Consonants I mean, instead, and in the force of Vowels; as are at this day, to the writings of the Rabbins. All our inquisition hath been concerning that kind of pointing now used; which whether more or less ancient, I would not have thought so necessary, as that without it, no *Bibles* should be thought *the Word of God*, or true Scripture: which I think is a very dangerous assertion; else, I had not said so much of it.

Now, the authority of the *Scriptures* upon such evidences of right Reason, once constituted and evinced; he that sticks at any thing which God hath spoken, or promised in his Word, so it doth not imply contradiction, which is not matter of power, properly but of nonsense rather, when it is so proposed, whether *God can*; (as if I should propose, whether God at the same time, can be God, and no God:) as doubting the possibility, must needs bewray great weakness and folly; and whilst he doubts, whether God can, he doubts in effect, whether there be a God; or whether God be God; which is a meer contradiction: even the Poet could say, *Ἐὶ μὲν γὰρ τίς μ' ἀλλοῦ ἐπιχθονίων ἐκέλευεν—Ἐδδ' ὅτι κεν φάμεν—νῦν δ' αὖτις γὰρ ἄκροσθ' ἔειπ'.*

&c. But let them go, and their authority, though  
 once so great in the world, that they made  
 Gods at their pleasure. Let a man consider of  
 it rationally, and he will find that of *Theo-*  
*odore*, a very rational man, most true; that  
 there is truly and properly but one *miracle* in  
 the world; and that is, an *Omnipotent God*.  
 That once granted. to stick at the possibility  
 of any thing that doth not imply contradiction  
 (which would argue weakness rather than  
 power, as even Heathens could say; and  
*St Augustine, De Civit. Dei*, l. 5. c. 10. doth  
 excellently prove: ) though never so strange in  
 our eyes, doth argue great weakness; since that,  
 to an Omnipotent God, all things, the strangest  
 that we can conceive, are not onely possible,  
 but of equal facility. Of all other particulars of  
*Epicurus* his Philosophy, though generally ri-  
 diculous enough; there is not any, in my judge-  
 ment, that doth argue the sottishness and bru-  
 tishness of the man, more strongly and effectually,  
 then his conceit, in pronouncing of the  
 nature of God, by the nature and properties  
 of men in general; and by his own proper  
 temperament, particularly. Therefore he deny-  
 ed that God medled with the world, because  
 he thought it was not to be done without  
 much care and solicitude; (so, many Kings and  
 Princes, in a less Government, have found it  
 we confess: ) whereas he placed happiness in  
 perfect ease, both of body and mind. Brutish  
 man! How much better the Stoicks, of the na-  
 ture of God, whose words I like so well upon  
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this subject, that I cannot but think the Reader also will be pleased with them. Tully doth express them thus: *vos enim ipsi dicere soletis, nihil esse, quod Deus efficere non possit, & quidem sine labore ullo. Ut enim hominum membra, nulla contentione, mente ipsa, ac voluntate moveantur; sic numine Deorum omnia fingi, moveri mutarique posse. Neque id dicitis superstitiose, atque aniliter; sed physica constantique ratione. Materiam enim rerum, ex qua, & in qua omnia sunt; totam esse flexibilem & commutabilem, ut nihil sit, quod non ex ea, quamvis subito, fingi convertique possit. Ejus autem universa fictricem & moderatricem, Divinam esse providentiam.* The summe is, that the power of God over the world, is as the will of man over his body, and the several members of it; which he can with the least intention, or intimation of his will, turn and weild into what form and posture he will, and by nature it is capable; and this without any trouble, so much as of words; but by thought onely; then which nothing can be more at command. There is much in this comparison, if things were looked into philosophically and skilfully; but that such is the nature of ordinary men, to wonder at nothing which is usual. Otherwise, the very consideration of our bodies, and of man in general, will afford such wonders, as, well understood, would make us look well on them, as very fools and ideots that can think any thing impossible to God, whose wisdom hath continued those things which we daily see, and feel. What



*St Augustine* very truly saith of the works of nature in general; we may with as much truth apply to the nature of man particularly: *Quamvis & ipsa quæ in rerum natura omnibus nota sunt, non minus mira sint, essentque stupenda considerantibus cunctis, si solerent homines mirari, nisi rara.* Therefore saith *St Augustine* very well, what we call *nature*, if well considered of, is nothing else but the will of God: and none but such a brute as *Epicurus* was, could have entertained such a conceit of God, that he was liable to pain, and labor, and lassitude, because (wretched fool!) he found it so in his own body. For my part I cannot pretend to such knowledge of nature, neither hath it been my study, nor the happiness of my life, (by reason of troubles and frequent sicknesses:) that I ever had much time to spare from the necessary occasions of my profession. Yet so much knowledge I have or think I have of *nature*, that having spent some time, and perused best books to understand the nature and causes of things, which are most obvious to our eyes, thinking it a preposterous course, to go far to find miracles, which we might find at home plentifully; I soon came to that, that I thought I could see nothing, though never so daily and ordinary; but, if looked into Philosophically, did afford me a miracle, and for ought I could find, posed the wisdom of the wisest I could consult, though I found some bold enough, (especially, since the Atoms have been in such credit:) and confident in assigning of causes, but such, when

when well considered of, that could not much satisfy, and seemed to me to make the matter more difficult and incomprehensible than I thought it before. Besides man, who considered in his spiritual part, the faculties of his soul and the operations of his mind, his wit, memory and the like; or in the frame of his body, and all parts and particulars of it, and their uses; may be accounted the *wonder of wonders*: the variety of Plants and Herbs, and their properties, and several efficacies and operations: the variety of Creatures in Sea and Land, and their nature and properties; besides those *miranda natura*; which have been observed by many, secret *Sympathies*, *Antipathies*, and the like: the miraculous effects of mechanical, or Mathematical Engines, such as *Archimedes* invented; the very secrets of ordinary Trades, if looked into Philosophically, will afford matter enough of admiration, and the effects of some of them, from such and such causes, puzzle best wits. But then those supernatural effects and operations by Witches and Magicians, which are daily seen; (though not acknowledged by all men, I confess, but upon what account, hath been enquired and fully discoursed by us elsewhere: though liable to such imposture, it is confessed (and what is not in this world) yet many of them so certain, and so well attested, as nothing can be more :) whereof we have given many pregnant instances in the same book :) can he that believes them, and knows how to make a difference, between the power

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of created Spirits, and an Eternal God the Creator of all things; think any thing impossible to God? O *Incredulity* worthy to be admired beyond any witchcraft, and, if not direct witchcraft, yet proceeding (certainly in men, rational, otherwise:) from the same cause, or agent, as ordinary witchcraft doth.

This mention of Witches and Magicians, brings a thing into my mind, which I conceive doth well deserve consideration: that Christ did many great *miracles*, as it is acknowledged by the Jews, who persecuted him living, and curse his memory to this day: so was it by many Heathens, who yet continued Heathens, and took upon them to plead Reason for their *Incredulity*; what if he did? others have done many, (as great they would say; but could not truly of those they intended:) who never took upon themselves to be Gods, or issued from Gods upon that account; even Magicians, men infamous, and by the Laws of men punishable. How far some ancient Christians have yielded to them in this point; that is, that Christ his *miracles*, though so great, and so many; were no certain proof of his Divinity, or Divine Origine; no, nor *Sanctity*, as some others, and what to be thought of it; is the thing I propose to my self, now to consider of. *Lactantius* his resolution upon the point, may be thought somewhat bold, and yielding too much (though elsewhere he doth argue it with more circumspection) to the

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Heathens



Heathens, when he saith so peremptorily : *Fecit mirabilia* (Christus : ) *Magum putassemus, ut & vos nuncupatis,, & Judæi tunc putaverunt,* &c. what he doth add to reprove this inference, which the Gentiles made, and he doth seem (if barely so proposed : ) to yield to ; that is, *Vaticinia Prophetarum*, &c. shall be more fully considered of by and by ; and proved very sufficient to their confutation. But yet (all respect to former Prophecies laid aside : ) whether it might rationally, or probably be inferred, that Christ did his miracles by Magick, is the question ; and all men, it seems, even Christians, have not been of one opinion about it : upon what grounds, without further seeking at this time, I shall refer my self to *Eusebius*, in his *Demonst. Evang. lib. 3. cap.* *τὸς τοῦ διοκλητῆρος γόντα γεγονέναι τὸ χεῖρὲν τοῦ Θεοῦ* where the matter is fully argued, and for good reasons, as I conceive, proved. that it could not be so. Among other reasons, one ( which I purposely take notice of ) is, because his Disciples did not onely forbear such practices themselves, but did not allow them ( proved out of *Acts 19. 19.* to which some other places might have been added ) to any others, who pretended to Christianity : where he hath those remarkable words concerning the primitive Christians : *All these things are banished from the Doctrine of Christ ; neither was any Christian, ever seen, or heard of* ( so accounted by Orthodox Christians, we must understand ) *who did use* ( *φάρμακον, &c. ἢ δὲ ὀπλῶν, καὶ πινῶν* )

τηνων φελέρων ἐπιγεγραμῖς) either *Ligatures*, or *Charms* or *inscriptions* on *Magical plates* (or *leaves*) or *such other things*, the *use* whereof many other (Gentiles) think indifferent. I do not follow the *Latine*, which I think is not to be followed here, let the Reader judge: neither must he follow the *Greek Paris* edition altogether, in the former lines, where more particulars of this kind of unlawful practices, are mentioned. But ἀσκήσεις, a *Typographical* mistake, for ἀνέσεις, there he shall find, which out of better Editions, and the *Latine Translation* (right enough here) he may correct. And was this the practice of *Primitive Christians*? Lord, how are we degenerated from true *Christianity*! what conjuring *Almanacks*; what other books, *Theomagia*, and the like are abroad, and pass currently? but this by the way onely.

But whither *Christs miracles* were of themselves without any further consideration in point of reason, sufficient to manifest or make faith of his *Divinity*; or being the *Son of God*; is another question, and not so easily determinable. *Christ* indeed in *St John* doth, seem to appeal to his miracles, *Joh. V. 3. X. 38. XIV. 11. XV. 24.* and again, in his answer to them that were sent by *St John* the Baptist, *Mat. XI. 4. 5.* However, *St Augustine* seems not to have understood the words of *Christ* to this effect, and rather to encline to their opinion, who maintained, that *Christ* his miracles, without any further consideration, were not preavailable to

that end, to make faith or evidence of his Deity: for when the question was proposed unto him by *Volusianus*, (a man of no mean condition, and whom *St Augustine* much respected) as an objection of some, either Heathens, or weak Christians, in these words, that *nullo competentibus signis claruerunt tanta majestatis indicia, quoniam larvalis illa purgatio* (cleansing of Lepers) *debilium cura* (the blind, lame, and dumb, may be understood by *debiles*, if allusion be made to *Mat. 11. 5.* or else, the Paralyticks, or, men sick of the Palsie, and others, mentioned, *Mat. IV. 24.*) *reddita vita defunctis; si & alia considerentur, Deo parva sunt*: *St Augustine* in his answer doth acknowledge, that some Prophets had done as much; and that wicked men and heathens also by the power of the Devil, (though I question it much:) he doth not absolutely deny. He therefore in that Epistle, to prove the Divinity of Christ, doth make use of other arguments, very good and convincing; whereof one is, that he was long before prophesied of by *Moses*, and other Prophets, that he should come into the world and do miracles, which is the thing that *St Augustine* doth constantly plead for Christs miracles, as sufficient to witness his Deity; not barely, that he did such and such things, but that he was long before promised and prophesied of, that he should come into the world, and do such and such things: so that in the 12 of his books against *Faustus*, the Manichean: *ut enim non contemnerentur, &c.* that is,



is, lest those things which the Apostles did preach concerning Christ, should be contemned, and derided, as fabulous, (that is, either false or insufficient evidences:) the same things were proved and demonstrated to have been foretold of him, by Prophets of old: for though miracles were not wanting, yet neither would men, as to this day we know there be such secret whisperers, have been wanting, who would have attributed all those miracles to Magick Art and Power, had not this their fancy been suppressed by the attestation of Prophets. For no man could think, that he had so long before he was born by Magical Art, constituted unto himself Prophets, that should attest such things of him. And so generally, he doth not, if well looked into, seem to ascribe so much to the miracles of Christ, as certain evidences of his Deity; but as they had been foretold of him, that he should do such so long before. And which is more strange in that excellent Treatise, spoken of before, *de fide invisibilium*: which might as well be inscribed; *of the truth of Christianity*: he doth not in all that Treatise, (if I be not much mistaken) so much as mention miracles; but the fulfilling of Prophecies onely; which it seems he accounted so much the greater miracle, or convincing evidence. And to this purpose may the words of Christ, (and are by many) understood, who *Joh. V.* after he had spoken of his works; goes on immediately; *search the Scriptures, &c.* besides, that the words before, *and the Father himself which hath sent me, hath born witness of me*:

may also be understood of Prophetical Predictions concerning Christ. So also *S Peter 2. Ep. 1. ch. v. 17, 18.* after he had mentioned *the voice from Heaven*, recorded *Mat. XVII. 5.* concerning Christ; he doth presently add, *V. 19. We have also a more sure word of Prophecy, &c.* and so may Christs words, *Mat. XI 4. 5.* be construed too, *The blind receive their sight, &c.* as being taken out of the the Prophet *Isai*, to whom Christ therefore by those words, seems to send *John the Baptist*, for a resolution of his question. But nevertheless, because Christ very expressly, *John XV. 24. If I had not done among them the works, &c.* and *St Paul* as expressly, *Acts XI. 22, a man approved of God ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀποδείκνυμενον*, a word of great weight,) among you, by miracles, wonders, and signs, &c. it must be acknowledged, that Christ by the numbers and variety of his miracles, (both which, number and variety are very considerable in this case :) done publickly (and that too, a very considerable circumstance :) did sufficiently evince, that what he did, he did it by a Divine power, as sent and imployed by God; and upon that account, that what he said of himself, or otherwise, must be true, and ought to be beleaved, as Divine revelation. He therefore professing of himself, that he was the Son of God, and God himself; it will follow, that his miracles (though the concurrence of other evidences, in so high a point, the highest that ever was proposed to mans beleef, did very well :) were very sufficient, to make him known, and beleaved such. As to *St Augustines* answer to *Volusian*, whereof

whereof we have spoken ; it may be said, though the miracles mentioned in *Volusian's* objection or question proposed, be acknowledged by *St Augustine* not sufficient alone, to declare his Divinity ; yet he doth mention others, which were : which are, that he was born of a Virgin ; did arise from the dead ; ascended into Heaven. These he reckons as Christs proper miracles ; and these it seems by him, the Gentiles did not so much except against, as insufficient ; as they did question the truth of. But therein was their *incredulity* manifest, if they granted, because so well attested and known ; the truth of those, which they thought others might do, or had done ; who were but men, and which they accounted, as it were, miracles of a lower rank, and would not beleieve or acknowledge them, though as certainly attested as the rest, and some as publick ( as his resurrection : ) because they would not oblige themselves to beleieve ; or, to become Christians ; which *St Augustine* doth very well observe, and object unto them, as great and obstinate *incredulity*. But for the later Jews, to make so light of Christs miracles, as they do, and to the end, all others might think lightly of them, to devise such stories, both false and ridiculous some of them ; how miracles might be wrought ; must be lookt upon by men that are not Infidels themselves, as a great argument of a strange Blindness, and Infidelity, through Gods just judgement, for some great provocation : as is well observed, and more largely

discours-



discourſed by the Learned Author of the *Origines ſacrae* : which I would commend to the Infidels of this age, but that the book doth ſo ſufficiently commend it ſelf.

It was *St. Auguſtines* opinion, which he doth in divers of his works often repeat ; that things daily ſeen, not in Heaven only, but upon Earth; things which we daily ſee, handle, and feel ; are not leſs miracles, if well conſidered, then the greateſt miracles we hear of; who therefore might aſcribe leſs to Chriſts miracles (without further conſideration :) but as they were joyned with thoſe other evidences of his Divinity, as Prophecies, &c. and withal, ſo much he had partly ſeen, and partly, upon good attestation, he thought, beleev'd done by Witches and Magicians, that he did not allow of any miracles, ( whatſoever is ſaid to the contrary ; which they that look into him with any care, and without prejudice, will eaſily find ) as a mark of the truth, or a true Church ; but as they are joyned with thoſe other ſigns, or evidences, whereof he doth give a particular account in his Treatiſe *De utilitate credendi*, before ſpoken of; and elſewhere, more then once. It may be, *St Auguſtine* may be thought by ſome, to have been ſomewhat more credulous in this point of ſtrange relations, then became ſo wiſe, ſo Learned, and judicious a man, as certainly he was : neither do I think my ſelf bound to beleve all things in this kind, which he may be thought by his words to have beleev'd,

leeved. However, when I consider, it is the opinion of the Learnedst, as well Protestants as Romanists, that *Damon, etsi non potest facere vere miracula*, (it is, as a *miracle* is defined: for according to *St Augustines* definition, he may, certainly,; and so say others too, as *Maldonat* for one). *tamen potest facere apparenter maxima quaque*: (to use *Bellarmines* words; that is, that the Devil, though he cannot do true miracles, yet apparently, (or, in outward appearance,) he may, even the greatest that are: we must acknowledge it a singular providence, to take away all possible pretences of the most incredulous, and to make them altogether unexcusable, that Christ did not only such miracles, as for their *number* and *variety*, did evince a Divine power: but that it was also prophesied of him so long before, that he should do such miracles: and not that only, but all other particulars of his birth, life and sufferings, so clearly foretold.

But to *Volusianus's* question or objection, though the Censurer there (whether *Erasmus*, or any other) in the edition I have, make very light of that Epistle, and think *St Augustine* shewed himself a very patient meek man, that he did vouchsafe it an answer: yet my opinion is (and I beleeve, it was *St Augustines*) it contained an objection against Christianity, the most considerable in point of *Credibility*, that ever was made, or can be made: and which (whereof many instances might be given out  
of

of History : ) hath kept more people from the embracing of the Christian faith, then any other thing that I know. The question is : *utrum* ; how it could be, that *Mundi Dominus & Rector*, &c. the great Lord, and Governour of the world, could be continued in the womb of a Virgin, &c. aggravated thus ; *Intra corpusculum vagientis Infantiae* ( whence perchance, that noble English scoffer, or infidel, as to Christianity ; who was wont in familiar discourse, where he might be so bold, to deride Christianity, by talking of the *Virgin Mary*, and her *Baby God*, might have it : ) *latet cui parva putatur universitas*, &c. ( that part, *tamdiu a sedibus suis abest*, &c. to *mundi cura transfertur* : may be censured as impertinent, because no Christian did ever say, that God had forsaken Heaven, to enter the Virgins womb : ) *in somnos resolvitur, cibo alitur*, &c. If it be said, the matter might easily be resolved, by distinguishing of two natures in one Person : that indeed may soon be said, but however, this conjunction, or union of God ( the God of all Eternity ) and man, born of a Virgin, at such a time, &c. not so soon beleaved, or made *credible*. We said before, and commended *Theodoret* for it, in point of miracles or miraculous events, ( which are the effects, commonly, of an higher power, beyond ordinary nature : ) that there is but one properly true miracle in the world, and that is, an *Omnipotent God* ; which once granted, and with all this considered ( with *St Augustine* ) that whethersoever we turn our eyes,



eyes, or fix our thoughts, we see nothing; can think of nothing this universe doth yield, but if well looked into, and thoroughly sifted, will appear miraculous, and to best humane understanding (who have acknowledg'd it) incomprehensible: whereupon will follow, that to stick at the power of God in point of any miracle, or miraculousevent, for which we have authority from his Word, to beleeve it is his Will; must needs be an argument of great weakness and folly. Yes, be it so. 'Tis not *Theodore* only, that hath said so; and there is much of reason and probability in the speech. But this is a miracle of another nature: the more we are apprehensive of Gods Greatness and Omnipotency, which makes other miracles, probable; doth make this, or seem to make it, the more improbable, and *incredible*. To say thererfore the more *credible*, because *incredible*; and that such things become God best; that may seem most *incredible* to men, (so, more then one; but *Tertullian*, most wittily; *atque eo magis credendum, si quia mirandum est, idcirco non credendum. Qualia enim esse decet opera Divina, nisi supra omnem admirationem?*) may be said plausibly of other things; but in this case, will not much satisfy reason. In matters of power, or wherein an infinite power may be requisite, or must be supposed, it may do well; but in matter of *exinanition*, (to use the Scripture word) the consideration of Gods Power and Omnipotency to Reason, may be thought impertinent. It is a rule often commended unto us, by antient Fathers;

Fathers; whatever is spoken of God in the Scripture, ἀνθρωποπαθῶς; that is, by way of condescension to humane nature or infirmities; must be understood; Θεοπροπαθῶς, as may become the nature, (if we may so speak) of an infinite God. *Res incredibilis, si Dei potentiam arguat, &c. A thing incredible, if it argue Omnipotency, may be believed of God. The Creation of the World of nothing, (which was objected) who doth not see, that it manifestly argues omnipotency: but if we say that God hath assumed (or, clothed himself with) a body; that is to uncloath him of his Divinity; and of a God, to make him no God: an objection made by a Learned Jew, which in point of reason. without any farther evidence, may be thought reasonable enough. I have handled this elsewhere more largely; and therefore I will be the shorter here. But I conclude, that miracles in this particular, are not so proper to satisfy reason, but as joyned with other considerations; Prophecies, especially, that more sure word, as stiled by St Peter; which indeed are so full, (for by Prophecies, I do not understand verbal Predictions onely, but types and figures, and even histories and events, recorded in the Scripture:) and satisfactory, that taking them together, and all that may be added from external Testimonies in all ages; as that of sacrifices before spoken of; of Oracles so long in use, and just then beginning to cease, (which so amazed heathens; witness Plutarchs book of that subject:) soon after Christ, (the true promised Oracle of the world) and the like?*

like: we may conclude, that the whole world in a manner, since the Creation, hath been *parturient*, or in travel of this great truth, and mystery, till the birth of Christ: and again, conclude them very great Infidels, or guilty of greatest *Incredulity*, who having had the opportunity to search into these things; have done it with care and diligence; and have not received satisfaction enough, to become Christians: or very desperate, and resolved miscreants, who in a matter of such weight and moment (of eternal happiness or misery) whilst they spend themselves in the pursuit of worldly cares or pleasures, have neglected to take these things into their serious consideration, and to make it the main business of their lives.

But since we have named *external Testimonies*, besides what hath already been done and said before; I will now pass to another particular of the same nature, which however it may be looked upon now, before due consideration and examination of particulars; in former times I am sure, hath been thought very considerable, and hath made many Christians. *Plato* is the man I intend; whose very name, perchance, may give offence to them, who know what ill use hath been made of him, not antiently onely (who therefore among other Philosophers, hath been stiled by some, *the Patriarch of Heretiks*: ) but even of late, by some that have used his authority, not to confirm any points of true Christianity from him; but to corrupt and adulterate true Christianity, with



with some of his opinions, and fanfies. But let the Reader judge when I have done: will he have but the patience to read to the end, and judge impartially. That *Plato* was antiently, and his opinions, (by them, especially, that pretended to any Learning:) much inquired into by them, that took the cause of the Christian Faith, and Religion into their serious considerations, not only for the authority (in matters Divine, especially: he had among Heathens, generally; but because antient Christians, and Learned men made great use of his authority, and often quoted his words to them that were not yet satisfied concerning the Divine authority of the Scriptures; cannot be unknown to any, who are not altogether unacquainted with antient Christian writers, and Fathers. I will first here set down the account *St Augustine* doth give us out of *Plato*, and (for he had got them translated into Latine for his proper use; and he doth give God thanks for it, that put it into his mind:) some Platonick writers: and then we will examine particulars. *There*, saith he, *did I read* (not in these very words, but the thing it self proved by many arguments) *That in the beginning was the word, and the word was with God; and God was the word, (or, and the word was God: it was in the beginning with God; all things were made by it, and without it nothing was made that is made; that life is in him (or by him in some, even late Editions, the words are confounded) and the life was the light of men, and the light did shine in darkness,* and

and the darkness comprehended it not: and that the soul of man, though it bear witness to the light, yet is not light it self, but the word of God. God is the true light, that enlightneth every man that cometh into the world: and that it was in the world, and the world was made by it, and the world knew it not; but, that it came to his own, and his own received him not; but as many as received him, to them gave he power to be become the sons of God, to them that beleieve on his name: I did not read there. There also did I read, That God the word was born, not of flesh or bloud, nor of the will of man, nor of the will of the flesh, but of God. But, that the word was made flesh, and dwelt in or among us; I did not read there. That the Son is in the form of God, and did not think it robbery to be equal to God, because naturally he is so; I have found divers expressions in those books to that purpose. But that he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man, and being found in fashion as man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: that therefore God did exalt, (or raise him) from the dead, and gave him a name, which is above every name; that at the name of J E S U S——and that every tongue should confess, that the Lord Jesus is in the glory of the Father; those books have not. That before all times, and beyond all times, the only begotten Son doth abide without change, coeternal with the Father; and that the souls (of men) do take of his fulness, and that by participation of that wisdom,

dom, that abideth in him, they are renewed unto wisdom (or, become wise) is there. But, that in time he died for the wicked; and that thou hast not spared thine only Son, but given him for us all; is not there: so, there. And the same *St Augustine*, in the Eighth book of his *Confessions*, doth relate how *Simplicianus*, who succeeded *St Ambrose* in the Bishoprick of *Milan*, did congratulate him, that it was his luck to light upon those *Platonick* books; where he had found *God*, and his *Word*, which he had not found in the writings of any other Philosophers

But now let us observe, that these things were found in the books of *Platonicks*; *St Augustine* saith, he saith not, in *Plato* himself. Secondly, whether of ancients, who lived before Christ, or later *Platonicks*, who lived since, he doth not tell us; and most likely it is, in the writings of later, because we do not find antienter Philosophers of that Sect, (or very few) whose writings were then extant. Now, for the *Platonicks* that lived after Christ, that they say full as much, as *St Augustine* doth give an account, (*Proclus*, *Plotinus*, *Porphyrus*, *Nu-  
menius*, and others of most credit in these times) will easily appear, by what *Theodoret*, *Eusebius*, and divers ancient Fathers, produce out of them; and what later writers, as *Sten-  
chus*, *Eugubinus*, *De Perenni Philosophia*, and others have gathered out of them. But their authority is less considerable, because among  
them



them, some were between both, half Christians, and half Platonicks, (in very truth, no Christians, because not altogether so :) others, though great enemies to the Christian Religion, yet did borrow from it both words, and opinions, (somewhat disguised, perchance :) which they thought most plausible, or did find most popular : ( so *Plotinus*, *Hierocles*, *Porphyry*, and divers others ; ) so that I do not see, (except it be to confirm the reasonableness of the Christian Religion) what we can make of such testimonies ; ( in point of providence, or prophecy ) to confirm the truth of it. Our business therefore will be, to enquire what *Plato* himself, so many ages before Christ, undoubtedly and cleerly hath delivered, in that kind, wherein, or whereby some mysteries of our faith may be thought concerned ; or more generally, some notable circumstances of the nature, or history of Christ. And this the rather because what is produced out of antienter Authors, as *Zoroaster*, *Trismegistus*, the *Sybils*, and the like, we have not, (to say no more at this time :) the like certainty, either of the persons, who they were, and when they lived ; nor of their writings, whether ever any such things (as now extant :) were written by them ; whereas of *Plato*, and his writings ( such at least, as we shall make use of ) there is as much certainty, as if he had lived but one age or two since ; yea, much more, I may say ; since, that the writings of divers, partly, because of the obscurity of their persons, or otherwise,

for other reasons, who lived within that compass of time, have been questioned : but never *Plato*, or those Books that go under his name, that I know of; so well was he known, while he lived; and so great hath the credit of his writings been, (till Christ, and for divers ages after, especially :) ever since. But by the way, I find a passage of *Plutarch* also, ; quoted by Learned *Hugo Grotius*, to this purpose, in his Annotations on the 1 verse of the 1 Chapter of the Gospel according to *St John*. *Plutarch* also, saith he, doth call it ( *λόγος*, the word ) *δύναμιν Θεῷ*. A very considerable passage, because of *Plutarch's* authority, and the frequent use of those words in the Gospel, *δύναμις Θεῷ*, sometimes understood of Christ; and sometimes, otherwise. The question in *Plutarch* proposed, is, whether God, or Gods can have children. He saith no, at first, and that such an act, or action, must argue mortality, as liable to some change or alteration. But then he remembers a passage in *Plato* ( of Sacred authority with most Heathens, in those days : ) where he calls God the Father and Maker of the world. Thereupon he doth infer, that God may be a Father indeed, but not by seed as man is; but God by another power, impregnating the matter, with a principle of life; by which it becomes liable to change and alteration. The words are : ἀναθάρρῳ δὲ πάλιν, αὐτῷ Πλάτωνος ἀκῶν, πατέρας καὶ ποιητὴν τῆς κόσμου, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων γεννητῶν, ἢ ἀγέννητον καὶ αἰδίου Θεὸν ὁνομάζουσιν, ὃς διὰ σπέρματος δύνει γενεαίνων.

(Printed

(Printed γένεσθαι) ἄλλη δὲ δύναμις τῷ Θεῷ, τῇ  
 ἑνὶ γόνιμον ἀρχὴν, ὑφ' ἧς ἔπαυται, καὶ μετέβαλε, ἐν-  
 πύον. Here is no such thing, as δύναμις Θεοῦ,  
 but, Θεὸς ἐνπύον, ἢ διὰ σπέρματι, not by Seed,  
 but ἄλλη δύναμις, by another power: except a  
 man would say, that if God is said to do any  
 thing by any power, that power may be called  
 the power of God, καὶ ἐξοχὴν, that is in a special  
 manner, or eminently; (for at large, we know  
 it may:) which I think not, and would be  
 liable to much inconvenience.

But now to *Plato*, and what is found in him  
 of this great mystery. Three or four places are  
 commonly produced out of him; as First, out  
 of his *Epinomis*: where he saith plainly, that  
 θεῖον λόγον, the most *Divine word*, ἔταξε  
 τὸν κόσμον, did constitute or order the world:  
 now that by the *Word* he doth mean, not God  
 absolutely, but one that was begotten of God  
 the Father, (for so he calls him) doth ap-  
 pear by some other places; as by those words  
 in his *Epistle to Coriscus*, where he distin-  
 guisheth between τὸ πᾶντων Θεὸν ἡγεμόνα, and  
 τὸν ἡγεμόνα, καὶ αὐτὸν Πατέρα κτίων. These words  
 also may be found in his *Timaeus*, διὰ πάντα  
 δὴ ταῦτα, εὐδαίμονα Θεὸν αὐτὸν ἐγεννήσατο; Trans-  
 lated by *Cicero*: Sic Deus ille aeternus hunc per-  
 fecte beatum Deum procreavit. who can read  
 this, that λόγον, the *Word*, begotten of the Fa-  
 ther, or, first cause; ἔταξε τὸν κόσμον hath consti-  
 tuted the world,; and hath read in *St Iohn*,  
 ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος — πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο —



καὶ ὁ λόγος δι' αὐτὴν ἐγένετο, &c. *Iohn* 1. v. 3. 10.  
 but, in a thing so remote from humane sense  
 and apprehension, would say, that either *St Iohn*  
 had read *Plato*; or *Plato St Iohn*: or, because  
 the first is as ridiculous to conceive, as the se-  
 cond is impossible; that both had it (as of the  
 one we are sure) from Divine Revelation?  
 but that which doth much abate of the credit  
 and authority of *Plato's* words, is, that after-  
 wards he doth tell us of inferior Gods (to whom,  
 though mortal, because made or engendered;  
 yet God, out of a special favour, or providence,  
 doth promise immortality) to whom the Eter-  
 nal God doth commit the ordering of the ma-  
 terial world. The truth is, as the Author doth ac-  
 knowledge more then once, he was upon a very  
 difficult point, and above mans skill or know-  
 ledge; and therefore desires his company, or audi-  
 tors, to accept of what he was able to say, by  
 way of conjecture; but could not warrant for  
 truth; *S. Ioh.* did not so, nor *Moses* did not so, but  
 wrote as one that had authority from God, and  
 durst stand to what he did deliver: for which we  
 know, even by judicious Heathens, he hath  
 been commended, yet there be passages in that  
*Dialogue*, that would make a man think the Au-  
 thor was not altogether a stranger to the  
 truth, as it is delivered by *Moses*. As when he  
 saith (whereof see more in *St August. De Civ.*  
*D. XI. 21.*) that God would make nothing but  
 what was good: and, ἐπεὶ ὁ καὶ πρὶν τοῦ εὐνοῦσαι  
 πᾶσι ἢ τὸ φυχῆς εὐνοῦσαι ἐπαγίνετο; that is, *When*  
*the Creator of Souls saw, that business of Souls*

to be settled, καὶ τὴν, to his own mind: Where Cicero, as a stranger to that Scripture expression, often repeated in the History of the Creation: *God saw that it was good*; whether of purpose, to make a greater mystery of it, or accidentally; or perchance out of wrong Copies; doth turn it quite to another sense, *animam igitur cum ille procreator mundi Deus, ex sua mente, ac Divinitate genuisset, &c.* But the most mysterious place produced out of *Plato*, as a Testimony concerning the Trinity it self: is out of his Epistle to *Dionysius* the Tyrant; where indeed *Plato* himself doth profess, that he will write ænigmatically. The words are, Περὶ τῶν πάντων βασιλεῖα τὰ πάντα ὅτι, καὶ ἐκείνη γὰρ ἐνεργ, πάντα, καὶ ἐμείνου γὰρ αὐτοῦ πάντων καλῶν. Ἰδιότερον δὲ, ὡς τὰ ἰδιότερα, καὶ ἡμίον, ὡς τὰ ἡμίονα. Here *Plato* doth seem to establish three kind of Causes, by their relations to three kind of Beings. But what his meaning was, is hard to resolve; when himself, it seems, was afraid; or not willing to be understood. *Ficinus* there, doth acknowledge *ingens Mysteriorum*; but what is that he would make of it, (except it be, that God is the only true Creator of all things; which I think is no great mystery:) I profess, I do not well understand. Antient Platonicks, we are sure, found no less then a *Trinity* in the words, and no man can blame the Fathers, if they were willing to make use of their concessions to win them to the Faith, with whom such arguments were of great weight. Certainly when *St Paul* told the *Athenians*, after he had seen their inscription, to  
the

the *Unknown God* in the streets; he did preach that God unto them, whom they worshiped under that name, (*Acts* 17. 23.) he did not expect he should have been put to it, to have made his words good in preciseness of arguing, who elsewhere, and upon another occasion, did not stick to say, that what the *Gentiles sacrificed was sacrificed* (*1. Cor.* X. 20.) unto Devils: and yet he thought he had ground enough from that inscription, to prevent (if he could) the accusation of *preaching strange Gods*, for which some he knew (as *Socrates*, for one :) had been put to death. If this were not only lawful, but no small argument of wisdom in *St Paul*; how can we make less of it, then a singular providence of God, for the easie progress of the Christian Religion, that so many Learned Heathens, and amongst them some, who professed greatest enmity to the truth of it; should give by their interpretations of *Plato*, whether right or wrong; such advantage to Christianity? I say, whether right or wrong; though I make no question, but that all, or most antient Christians, who made use of those interpretations for the advantage of Christianity; did verily beleieve, that those interpretations were right and true. And that they had ground enough from *Plato's* own words and expressions to beleieve it, (though otherwise doubtful and obscure enough, I grant;) as one that hath been in his time, a diligent Reader; and great admirer of that Philosopher, I profess to beleieve. And it is very observable that no Platonists of those times, so many



many, and so zealous for their Master, and his Doctrine, and among them, some great adversaries to the Christian Religion; did ever lay, that I know of, to the charge of any Orthodox Christian, that they had falsified *Plato*, or perverted his words or sense; to confirm any part of their Doctrine, with his authority, which was so great in the world: whereas it is well known, that when the Gnosticks, notorious Hereticks, but pretenders to Christianity, attempted such a thing, and to that end, forged books at their will, (by which some Christians also were deceived) adscribing them to men of greatest (as supposed) antiquity; they were stoutly opposed by some Platonists, and their imposture discovered; as we read in the life of *Plotinus*, written by *Porphyrus*; and in *Plotinus* himself in his book, *αὐτῶν Ἰωαννῶν*, or *contra Gnosticos*. For any man therefore to say, that neither *Plato*, nor his Interpreters, in their discourses about the three principles, or causes (such as are produced out of them, by the antient Fathers, and Writers) had no more thought of any such thing, or mystery, then either *Euclid* when he Treateth of a Triangle, having three Angles equal to two right Angles; or *Aristotle*, in his Doctrine of three natural principles; or of three figures of Syllogisms; is a bold, and groundless (though qualified with a *forſan*.) assertion; which nevertheless I less wonder at, when I consider, how dubiously the same Author doth express himself concerning that grand Mystery of our Faith the Tri-



mystery ; which yet it doth cleerly appear by *Plato's* words, that he did. But to say, that by what he wrote, he directly, or his Interpreters, intended the Christian Trinity : there may be somewhat of just offence or scandal in that speech : and if any of the Fathers have said it, they must be favourably understood, as *St Paul* expected he should, when he said to the *Athenians*, he declared that God to them whom they worshipped ; to which, if precisely taken, they might have answered, if they worshipped him already, he might have spared his Declaration. And I willingly subscribe to Learned *Vossius*, who doth charge *Cluverius* a late Geographer, of great rashness, for saying, the *Germans* were well acquainted with the mystery of the Trinity, because he had found some where, that the *Germans* worshipped Three Gods only ; or, (which is more true ) three, especially, and above the rest.

Well, by what hath been said of him hitherto, I hope it will be granted that *Plato* was a considerable man ; and that good use hath been made of him, and the authority he had in the world, for the advantage of Christianity, which made *St Augustine* to say somewhere, that the Platonick Philosophy did differ but little, from the Christian Religion. And were it so, that we did owe unto *Plato* no more then such a man as *St Augustin*, and some other Greek Fathers as the most visible means, (not excluding other means, and still looking upon God as the supreme



pream efficient Agent,) of their conversion to the Christian faith; I think he well deserved his name should be had in honour and respect among good Christians. I shall now proceed to somewhat that will not have so much obscurity, but in my judgement is as considerable, as any thing that hath been said hitherto: I say that *Plato* did in some manner prophecy both of Christs coming into the world, and the manner of his death. If I cannot make good what I say, so far as may rationally be expected; I do not know how to excuse my self from being guilty of that which I do very much dislike in others; and that is, of making mysteries of trifles; then which I think, no greater wrong can be done to the Truth. But the Reader will remember that we are upon external Testimonies, such as may best fit those, who give little or no credit to the Scriptures. Now for the First, because I do not remember any observation in any antient writer to this purpose; I will make use (which will acquit me of being singular in this opinion:) of the judgement of a very Learned man, who did set out *Aristotles* works in *Paris*, some 30 or 40 years agoe, with good useful observations. His Judgement (besides his Learning) may be the more considerable, because it may appear by him, that he was a greater friend, by much, to *Aristotle*, then *Plato*. Yet not so partial, but that he doth acknowledge *Plato* to have deserved much; as for other things, so particularly much to be admired, (he saith) that he did teach the ineffable

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Incarnation, and coming of our Lord Christ, and did in a manner presage (or foresee) the Doctrine of the Gospel, when he said, that men must acquiesce a while to his instructions and admonitions; until a more venerable (or) Majestick man, and more sacred, who would open all sacra-ries and fountains of Truth, should appear upon earth; whom, as one that could not erre, all men should be bound to follow: for who else, by this more Majestick, more Sacred man can be meant, &c. So he, the worst is, he doth not quote the passage or passages out of Plato, upon which he doth ground: he doth not, but I elsewhere in a discourse of this subject, *Christ his Incarnation*, have produced divers passages out of Plato, to this purpose, where the Reader may find them if he please; and this is all I shall say, as to the first point, of Christs coming into the world.

As for the Second, the manner of his death; I think there is no antient writer almost, but hath it; and learned *Grotius*, in his observations upon *Matthew*; his judgement is, that (*non sine Divinae Providentiae instinctu*:) it was not without an instinct of Divine Providence, that Plato did write so. The passage is out of his Second Book *de Repub.* and goeth commonly, (that passage) under the notion or title *De crucifixione justi*, or, of the crucifying of the just. I confess, when I first met with it in some of the Antients, before I had observed it in the Author himself; I was so taken with it, that I resolved

resolved to examine it diligently, both by the coherence and other circumstances, and to know the utmost that can (rationally) be made of it: which to do, not one book only must be looked upon, but a man had need to peruse the whole Ten Books; inscribed by *Plato*, πολιτειῶν, καὶ (or, ἡ : ) περὶ δικαιοσύνης : *De rep. vel. De justo* : that is, of the constitution or government of a Commonwealth: or, of Justice and Righteousness: (it may also be translated, of the just, or, just man:) which later, of justice or righteousness, is the more proper to it, then *De Repub.* there being but little in the whole ten Books, that doth much concern Government, in general, or forms of Government; the chief subject of *Aristotles* Politicks. *St. Ambrose* therefore, not without cause, doth intitle the whole work (but whether because he thought, that the more convenient Title; or, because he found it so entituled elsewhere, I cannot tell:) *De virtute*. And *St. Ambrose* his opinion concerning that writing of *Plato*, was, that *Plato* in his travels into *Ægypt*, came to the knowledge of the Prophets, and observing in some of them, what was said of the calamities of just men, and prosperity of the wicked in this world; took occasion from thence to write those Books. So *Clemens Alexandrinus*; and *Eusebius*. But *Leo Castrensis*, is very confident, that *Plato* took the argument of those books from the 2d ch. of the *Wisdom of Solomon*: it cannot be denyed, but that as to the subject, there is some affinity; but whether that be enough to make such an inference,



rence, and how he doth prove that *Wisdom of Solomon*, now extant, to be of that antiquity; I leave that to him: neither indeed do I know certainly what he saith; I have him not: what I have, is but out of *Possevinus* his *Apparatus ad Philosophiam*, Printed at *Venice* 1605.

Now to give an account to the reader of the design of that whole work, *de Republica*, otherwise entituled *πολιτικὴ*, that is, of justice, or, of the just or just man; ( whose Title that is, in the Scripture, the Christian Reader need not be told: ) that so he may judge the better of that particular passage, which so many have taken notice of; and which I confess, did much affect me: to do this, I must crave the liberty of my own private *Adversaria*, (or Note-books) as I entered it there, 30 if not 40 years ago: not that I so much trust to it, ( being done so long ago, for my private use: ) but because I am so disabled by bodily weakness, ( which also affords me but a very little portion of the day, to look upon Books; ) from turning such Volumes, (of that size, I mean) that I must either let it alone, or run the hazard of doing of it worse, ( because, more hastily ) then I did so long ago, when so much younger; the account therefore I have there, (if the Reader will accept of it, who may do much better, if he be able to seek it from *Plato* himself) is this:

Platonis locus, de justis calamitatibus, ipsaque  
adeo Crucifixione.

In

In toto Platone nullus est magis illustris locus, quam qui a Theodoro *Διαλ. η.* à Clemente Alexandrino, & Eusebio; fortassé & aliis, citatur de iusti maximis malis, & calamitatibus, quibus in hac vita obnoxius est. Extat autem libro 2<sup>o</sup> De Rep. Bas. edit. p. 383. Serrani, p. 361. Meminit & Grotius, *De veritate Rel. Christ.* p. 133. Opponi potest, Platonem non hic ex sua sententia loqui, sed alios, vitam iusti, casusque ejus varios sic exponentes & exaggerantes, ut injustitiam justitia potiore & optabiliorem esse vincant, inducere: quod sanè verissimum est, & ex totius disputationis serie aperte liquet. Plato enim postquam hac occasione, *de Civili justitia, & felicitate R. P.* totis sex libris, qui proximè sequuntur, egit; nono tandem ad hunc *de iusti felicitate, vel infelicitate* locum regreditur; ac primò quidem, nono libro p. 580. &c. ad finem usque libri, ostendit in ipsa possessione justitiæ, & ejus exercitio, (vocat autem hic interdum *sapientiam*, vel *Philosophiam*: ) sitam esse maximam voluptatem: contrà autem, ambitiosos & avaros, ipsa vitiorum natura & conditione, variè torqueri, & cruciari. Decimo vero: p. 612. &c. præmia, quæ justos, & bonos, tum in hac vita, tum post mortem, manent; fusè prosequitur; quæ autem supplicia, injustos, &c. ac primò illud retractat, & confutat, quòd antea disputationis causa ad tempus concessum fuerat, fieri posse, ut homo justus, homines Deosque lateat; ac contra, injustus, pro justo habeatur, &c. ipsaque adeò temporalia præmia, quæ injustis perius, ut propria

pria ac certa concessa fuerant, justis vindicat, &c. ut contra illas ipsas calamitates justorum & supplicia; in injustos retorquet, &c. Sed respondemus non illud potissimum quæri, an Plato, malis istis quæ memorat, ac inter illa, *Crucifixioni*, (nam ἀναγινώσκειν, Hefychius exponit; ἀνασκολοπιῶνται:) maximè obnoxios putarit esse justos; quam vulgi opinionem ipse refellere conatur lib. x. sed illud sufficere, quod Plato, cùm illa mala & supplicia commemorat, perfectissimè justì effigiem & ideam, sive quis talis omninò reperiretur, sive non; repræsentare voluerit: quod ista ipsius verba indicant, quibus descriptionis illius scopum declarat; ἵνα ἀμφότεροι εἰς τὸ ἕνα ἔλθωσι, ὁ μὲν διχαιοσύνης, ὁ δὲ ἀδικίας, &c. Cæterum, quæcunque hic Plato, δαλύνων τῇ ὑποθέσει fortassè, tueatur; eum tamen ab hac opinione, justos maximis injuriis obnoxios esse, nec tamèn eò minùs fælices; non abhoruisse; ex ijs colligas, quæ de socratis morte, &c.

So there. One question may be moved, which there also I take notice of, but in short notes and references onely; whether ἀναγινώσκειν, be well rendred, by, *in crucem tolletur*. So indeed I find it in the Latine of *Ensebius*, of the *Paris Edition*: but in *Clemens Alex.* and *Theodoret*, suspendetur; though even that word, I know, is taken for *Crucifixion* also, sometimes. *Cicero* in his *Republica*, alluding to this passage of *Plato*, hath many words, by which he doth expresse the whole passage in general; but not any



any particular word, that doth expresse this: *Seneca*, in *Lactantius*, doth seem to expresse it by, *extendere per patibulum manus*: which in *Plautus*, is, *dispeffis manibus patibulum portare*. Now *patibulum pro cruce*, is ordinary. *Hesychius* indeed doth expound it by *ἀνασκολοπιζέω*, which is often taken for *Crucifigere*. But Learned men who have written of that subject, have well observed, that both *ἀναγκυρῶν δέω*, and *ἀνασκολοπιζέω*, are sometimes used of other kinds of death also. Neither deth *σούρω* always signify a *Cross*, properly; nor *σταύρωσις*, *Crucifiging*: but however, if not *crucifiging*, properly taken, (whereof nails, *clavi*; and, *extensio manuum*; are essential parts: ) we may be sure, that some grievous torment, and ignominious, answerable to *crucifiging*, is understood by the word. For my part when I remember a passage, in one of *Cicero's* Epistles to his friend *Atticus*, where he doth Divinely set out the heinousness of both affected, and effected Tyranny and Usurpation; ( O, that Christians, or rather, men professing Christianity, had as much conscience and sense of goodness and piety, as some Heathens have had ! ) not content to have said, that he had rather *mori millies quam semel illiusmodi quicquam cogitare*; he makes his friend to reply; what, not to wish it? what hurt is there in that? ( that is, to wish for a kingdom, be it gotten how it will: ) he answers; *sed ego hoc ipsum velle, miserius duco, quam in crucem tolli*: but, this very wish, saith he, I reckon is more miserable ( or, a greater cross and misery: ) then crucifixion.

crucifixion. Then wittily he recalls himself, *One thing only in the world is more miserable then such a wish; and that is, to compass and obtain what is (so wickedly) wished, or desired.* This place I say, when I remember; and withal, what an admirer *Cicero* was of *Plato*, and how well read he was in him; so well, that I think he had a good part of him by heart; I am very much perswaded, that by these words, *in crucem tolli*; he had reference to this particular word and place, as by the whole Epistle, to *Plato's* opinion, maintained in those Books.

I have said what I had to say concerning this Divine passage of *Plato*, as it may very probably be thought a Prophecy, concerning Christ our Saviour his death, and the manner of it: which without some inspiration, in so unlikely a thing otherwise, (that a man cannot be perfectly just, or attain to the perfection of justice, except after many other sufferings he be crucified at the last:) no man I think, whose eyes Atheisme, or Epicurisme hath not much dimmed, can Probably or rationally believe, that it could be. But I must add, that Learned *Grotius* makes a farther application of these words, and is much taken with it; to the words of Christ, *Mat. 10. 38. He that taketh not his Cross and followeth after me, is not worthy of me*, which may be thought a strange speech, or invitation; yet proved most true (taking the word *Cross* in a more general sense) in most of his followers, for a long time; but must needs be

less strange and offensive to those who were well acquainted with *Plato's* Doctrine in those books and elsewhere. And by the way if it be true, which is reported by some men of credit, that a *Cross* was worshipped, (whatever was the first occasion : ) in *America*, before the conquest of it by the Spaniards ; who would not look upon it, as a special Providence, to dispose them (as they say it did) to the speedier entertainment of Christianity ? I have good Authors for it ; but I am not confident.

After *Plato*, (for an external testimony) I know not any Heathens testimony, that is more considerable, or of more force to stop an Infidel (if he pretend to Learning) his mouth, then *Virgils* : whose very name, as I said before of *Ovids*, because he is read by boys in ordinary schools ; by light men, who seldom in their judgements, go farther then outward appearance ; may probably be slighted. Yet others, more sober and solid, who can look into the merits of a cause with better eyes then the vulgar of men are wont, or are capable of ; upon due consideration of the matter, I make no question, but they will be of another mind. I will not here insist upon *Virgil*, as the best of Poets (after *Homer* : ) that ever was known to us hitherto ; though if granted, as the best of Poets and and wits, ( besides other praises which seldom meet in one man : ) that have lived in our times ; famous *Hugo Grotius* judgeth of him somewhere ; *maximum sui saculi ingenium*



*ingenium*; or, *maximum humani generis ingenium*, ( which comes all to one, if restrained to his age: ) it would make Gods providence in this particular, somewhat more specious in ordinary estimation: but if not granted; it will not abate any thing of the weight and substance of what we have to say of him, and out of him. I will ask the most confident *Scoffer* or *Atheist*, (for I make no great difference:) that ever was; so he pretend to some Learning; how came it to pass that *Virgil*, a man very famous in his time for Wit and Learning, but never suspected by any man to have known Christ. or any thing of Christ, particularly, when born, or to be born, as foretold by the Prophets; how came he to celebrate his birth, and set out his office, yea, and nature, so punctually, as he doth according to the Prophets? That he hath done so, is the acknowledgement and observation of divers Antients, some Greek some Latine: and I will put it to the judgement of any impartial, unbiassed Reader: what could be written more properly, more emphatically concerning Christ, then all that *Eclogue* is; some few words ( which yet, as in a Poet, might bear a convenient interpretation ) excepted; by any that had read the Prophets often, and diligently sought into their meaning? That *Virgil* himself never intended any such thing, I easily grant; which is a greater argument of inspiration. His intention was, I make no question, to flatter a great man of those times. But whence should he have such expres-

sions which applied to man, the greatest that then lived, or ever was, (meer man : ) makes them, not improper onely ; but even ridiculous? all that can be said, and himself doth say it in a manner ; that he lighted on the verses of some *Sibyl*, (for that there were such antiently, who foretold strange things and were certainly inspired in their predictions, is not denied I think by any ; though there be pregnant proofs against those verses, now extant, and quoted by divers Fathers in their name : generally now descried by most of the Learned :) by which he understood, that some body was to be born about that time, to whom these Titles (as that he should be, *the Son of God, the restorer of peace, and happiness, and innocency to Mankind*, and the like ) were ascribed : and he to make his Poem the more solemn, did apply them *verbatim* to the birth of a child, to whom a Roman Prince of those days, under *Augustus* was Father, If we allow not of such Sibyls, we must say, that he met with some extracts, or excerpts out of the Prophets, whether in Prose or in Verse : such, as certainly had been made by more then one, and were kept as great rarities ; which was the opinion of some Fathers, concerning all that had been written by the Sibyls. Truly I must confess, though I have read that Poem pretty often, ( on *Christmas* day after *Church service*, I seldom omitted it : ) yet I still read it with equal delight and admiration: not so much for the loftiness of the verse, which is admirable, but for the cleer evidence of Gods hand

hand, and providence in it; which I think none can doubt, or question, but they that can believe the world was made of Atomes. I need not tell them that are Schollars, to others I may: that this Divine *Eclogue*, though now, I doubt, read by boys, more then by men; is to be found in a *Speech*, with his observations upon it, of a Christian Emperour, the greatest that ever was; even *Constantine the Great*; the first establisher; (and for that, deservedly *Great*, in all ages :) of Christianity in the world. A pious and Learned *Speech* it is; I might call it a *Sermon*, both for the argument, and for another reason, which *Eusebius* will tell them that desire to know; *De vita Constant. lib. IV. c. 29.* (but that I do not find, it was ever delivered by him, by speech, or word of mouth, publickly:) written by him in Latine, but afterwards by his order, Translated into Greek, by some of his Secretaries, as *Eusebius* doth tel us; and since that, preserved, and transmitted to posterity, by *Eusebius*. It is inscribed, *Ad Cœtum sanctorum*; To the company of the *Saints*; that is, (not *Rebels* or *Fanaticks*; that was not the meaning of *Saints*, in those days :) *Christians*. But I go on.

It is ascribed by many to *Luther*, as a proper *Paradox* of his, that *Incredulity* is the only sin, the cause of damnation to all that perish; in the maintaining of which *Paradox*, strange passages are produced out of him, which when I read in some books of Papists; I was very confident, they were meer lies and calumnies;



and that such a man as *Luther*, could not be the author of such horrid speeches. But I have found them since acknowledged by Lutherans of best account, as *Chemnitius*, *Gerard*, &c. who I think might have done much better, if contented to *Apologize* for *Luther*, partly from his life, (which certainly was good, and pious:) and partly from his other writings, wherein he doth very stoutly and peremptorily maintain the necessity of good works to salvation; they would have rested there, and not endeavoured by quaint glosses and expositions, to justify what is not justifiable, but apparently very gross and scandalous. That he was a man of an Heroick courage, whereof he made good use in that great work of *Reformation*; no man can deny, that is, not swayed more by interest and prejudice, then by right down truth. Now of such tempers, that much more liberty of speech (*ἡρωικὸν πάθος*, I think they call it) doth belong to such, then to ordinary men; is an antient observation, as by *A. Gellius* is somewhere recorded: I wish he had not made so much use of it. But on the other side *fidelis fornicarius*, *adulter*, *masculorum concubitor*, *fur*, &c. asserted by the Council of *Trent*, where they condemn (without naming him) *Luthers* opinion, is somewhat an uncouth expression, nor easie to be understood, how a man may loose grace, (*gratiam justificationis*) and yet continue *fidelis*: whereas *Luther*, where he doth explain himself, doth plainly maintain, that they that fall into such gross and mortal sins, as *Adultery*, *Fornication*,

nication, and the like; though they profess it still, and may be so deluded by the Devil, as to think themselves *faithful*, or in the possession of the true faith, nevertheless; make shipwreck of their faith also, at the same time; which I think more sound Doctrine, and less scandalous. But it may may be, by *fidelis*, they understood, one who doth not actually deny the faith; but, notwithstanding his wicked life, doth still continue in the opinion that Christianity is a true Religion, (in general:) yea, the only true Religion by which salvation may be had: which is the case of many great sinners, I make no question; but in that case, *fidelis*, in general is not so proper a word, as I conceive, nor so agreeable to the use of the Scripture, wherein eternal life is so often promised to *believers*: according to which is that of *St Johns*, *Esto fidelis usque ad mortem & dabo tibi coronam vitæ. Apoc. II. 10.* But I have nothing to do with controversies in general, but with *Credulity* and *Incredulity*, in matters of Faith or Religion: upon which account, this consideration did offer it self, whether all sins proceed from *Incredulity*? The ground of which question, though some derive from *Luther*; yet truly I derive it from the Scriptures of the New Testament, especially, which in many places seem so to determin it. But first we must limit it. for they cannot be properly charged of *Incredulity*, or *Infidelity*, (though by subtlety of arguments somewhat may be said perchance:) to whom, or among whom, Christ was never

preached. Now where, and to whom, Christ is sufficiently preached; if any continue *Infidels*, nevertheless, we may very well conclude, that *Infidelity* will be their condemnation; and probable it is, that why they did not believe, some great sin, as pride covetousness and the like, was the cause. But that they were greater sinners, then any that have believed, we may by no means conclude, it being free for God to dispense his Grace, as he pleases himself. Of them that have once really believed, whether, and how *Infidelity* may be accounted the cause of their sinning to death, and so of their condemnation, is the question by me here intended. To this effect, those words of Christ are understood by many, both ancient and later writers; *and when he is come, (the Comforter) he will reprove the world of sin, because they believe not on me.* John 16. 8, 9. *If any provide not for his own, and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse then an Infidel.* Tim. 1. 2, 8. *The fool, (that is the sinner) hath said in his heart there is no God; so the Psalmist, and so the Prophet Zeph. 1. 12. speaking of settled sinners in general: that say in their hearts, the Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil, which is according to the Scripture, a periphrasis of no God; and that was Epicurus, (the Favorite of the times) his God.* Many other places a man may find to the same purpose; but we will suppose we have to do with men, that care not much what the Scripture saith. How is it in point



point of Reason and Philosophy? it may be incidental to this enquiry perchance, to take into consideration these noted scholastical controversies; *utrum voluntas*, &c. *Whether the Will have such dependence from the discursive part, or faculty in man; that is, the understanding, as to be determined by it; that is, necessarily, and unavoidably ruled by its dictates, so that it have no power at all to swerve from it, or to decline in the least.*

And Secondly, whether Faith, true Christian Faith be an act of the *Will* properly, or, of the *understanding*. If the first be true, it will follow, that all sins, great and small, but greatest especially; proceed from *ignorance*, which was *Aristotles* opinion, by him largely disputed and maintained, in more then one place of his admirable *Ethicks*: which opinion, as perfectly agreeable with the Doctrine of the Scriptures, though incidental to many doubts and objections; and therefore opposed by many: is stoutly maintained by some Learned late writers, and doth not want some Abettors also in the Schools. As for the Second, it seems to depend in a manner from the First, and therefore hath for the most part, the same Learned Champions, though more generally opposed by the Schoolmen, who maintain *Faith* to be an act of the *Will*, or of both, but more of the *Will* then of the *Understanding*; whose decisions, (of some of the chiefest, at least) they that desire, may find in that excellent exquisite piece  
of

of the late Martyred Archbishop of *Canterbury*, entituled, *A Conference*, &c. of the last Edition, *A. D.* 1639. How opposed by others, the late great Champion of the power of the understanding over the Will, Learned *Cameron*, in more then one Treatise of that subject, will tell them that desire to know: but the arguing of these things at large, besides that it is already done sufficiently by others, would prove perchance more intricate and knotty, then useful or necessary, at least to our present enquiry; wherein I shall endeavour to condescend to the capacity of the meanest. It was said before, that though the Christian Faith, as we maintain, upon the evidence of the Scriptures, as *Divine*; besides other proofs and evidences, as *miracles*, and the like; be demonstrable by *Reason*, and to *Reason*, to those that are of capacity (and will intend it, without prejudice or preingagement: ) sufficiently to make their *Incredulity* inexcusable before God, and men; who for all that, continue in their *Incredulity*: yet as to Salvation, or real and effectual Conversion, it was not to be done by any external means, or evidences, without the concurrence and internal operation of Gods spirit, (a great work certainly; but, whether so fitly compared or equalled to the *Creation*, as it is confidently done by some, I know not; to the raising of the dead, I know it is by *St Augustine*; whose judgement otherwise is *utique plus est facere quod nunquam fuit, quam reparare, quod fuit*, &c.) at the same time; I will not take upon me

me to set down the way or method of Gods proceeding in this great work, as a general rule to which God doth tye himself, and whereby men may judge probably, or certainly, (besides *good works*, which I think the best and surest evidence of true regeneration) of any mans Conversion. The *Puritans* of *England*, I remember were wont to teach, that there is no true Conversion, but through the horrors of a sad kind of desparation, as antecedent to it, or always concomitant; and they made very good use of it, (for I will not say, they had all the same aime and end in it:) many of them. For when they had brought their Disciples as low as they thought fitting; then they were to raise them again by their methods (long prayers, and the like :) until they had put them in a seeming possession of heaven, which nothing, whatever their lives were, (so they kept to their tenets) could deprive them of: and so they had them fast enough, they thought, for the time to come, what occasion soever, for themselves, or others, they might have of them. The Jesuits, some of them, (for all, I dare say, are not acquainted with these mysteries) are said to use some such thing, to get to themselves some confidants, whom they may use in time of need. It may be our *Puritans* learned it of them, as they have done many other things.

I did wonder (to interpose this, with the Readers leave; by the way;) when very lately, in a book, that came to my hands by chance, intituled,



titled, *Now, or never* : printed at *London* 1662.  
 I found a long passage out of *Nerius*, (the founder of the *Oratorie* at *Rome*) his life, written by *Baronius* ; to prove, (although the Author cunningly pretend somewhat else :) the lawfulness, or plausibleness of *Conventicles*, in *England* : which in very deed proves nothing at all, the case being so different, in many respects ; and if it prove any thing, it is altogether built upon their authority, which, with true Protestants, is of no great validity. But the main drift of the book, (as, by many passages, to me doth seem very clear, though the Author doth profess to the contrary, somewhere,) is a continued cavil, or a secret insinuation, as though all, or most, Divines especially) that adhere to the Church of *England*, were great enemies to *seriousness*, in matter of religion, and piety. May they not, with as much probability, perswade their blind infatuated disciples, that all men, (Divines especially) who are not of their Sect, are cloven-footed, or have *long tayles*, as *Delrio* the Jesuite doth somewhere report of the *English*, or some *English*, that they have, or have had ; or that they are all cutters of purses, or coiners of false money ; or the like ? O the horror of schism, that can lead men (even such pretenders to *seriousness*, and for ought I have heard *serious* enough in their ordinary life and conversation) into such prodigious extravagances ! But to return.

I have known some sad effects of this doctrine

Arine; and I have heard of words. *St. Augustine* indeed in his book *de Doctrina Christiana*: lib. 2. cap. 7. may seem to have somewhat to this purpose. For treating of the several degrees of a mans conversion, he makes the fourth degree, to consist in a kind of mourning; proceeding from the first degree, a godly fear, upon a right apprehension of Gods judgements; and so doth proceed unto the rest. But their way is a shorter way; first desperation, or somewhat very near to it: then an absolute confidence, grounded upon it. Neither will I deny, but it may happen so, to some, sometimes, who become true converts. But, that to be the only way, is an invention of their own, that I think hath more of policy in it, in the first inventors, at least, and chief abettors, than of ignorance; not to be reconciled, I am sure, with the example of the thief upon the cross; which made *St. Chrysostome* affirm, that one hour sometimes, and less, may serve for a perfect conversion: nor reconcileable with what we read in the *Acts*, of the *Goatlers* rejoicing, at the very first of his conversion. More of this matter may be read in *Cassian*, his 13th Collation, and what is replied by *Prosper* upon it.

But I shall not, I was saying, take upon me to reduce Gods proceedings in this great work, to any certain constant forme, as to all particulars, either in the measure of the light, which he is pleased to impart, when he once begins the work; nor of the time he doth take to bring  
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it to perfection ; such perfection, I mean, as may be necessary to salvation. He knows the different tempers of men ; and how to bring every thing to pass, as may be most for his glory, and their good, that are converted. He knows also, who is infinite, as in Power, so in wisdom. Yet this generally we have good warrant from the Scriptures, to conclude, that the way generally by God used, is to make a man truly sensible of the danger of *Infidelity*, or *Incredulity*, if he continue in it, and the happiness infinitely exceeding all happiness this world can afford to the most happy ; of eternal life, in another world : the sense of which things, and the consideration of Gods Love, and Goodness (the same spirit still working) must of necessity breed a reciprocal love (more, or less, according to the measure of light imparted ; and somewhat also, as the natural temper of the man is :) and an earnest desire to serve God, according to his will, and the precepts of his Gospel ; with the detestation of sin, and the dreadful consequences of it. True it is, few mens faith, (except it be theirs, that have attained to an high degree of grace and godliness) doth alwayes continue in the same degree of vigour, and activeness : that light, from which the power of godliness doth depend, hath its declinations, and is subject to be overcast for a time, by the interposition of worldly cares, and allurements : but it cannot suffer a very long, or total eclipse, without a relapse, (though still the form, and perswasion, perennance, of godliness may continue ; ) to *Infidelity*



*delity* : especially where it doth shew and manifest it self by such works of darkness, which we know by the Scriptures, to be altogether inconsistent with Light, or any degree of Grace. It is not possible, that two contraries should harbour together, at the same time, in one and the same subject. The love of God, in some degree at least, is inseparable from true and real faith : but where the love of the world, and the pleasures of it, is not only predominant for a time, but altogether settled, and rooted, how can there be any degree of the love of God, when the Scripture is so plain, that *the love, or friendship of the world, is enmity with God?* James 4. 4. Besides, where there is any true apprehension, though not equal, at all times ; yet true, and real apprehension of eternity, and in that eternity, of the joyes of Paradise, and the torments of Hell ; how can it be, that such an apprehension should not work on the will and affections ; and produce effects accordingly ? How natural it is to man, who is endowed with reason naturally, and in present possession of natural reason ; to forbear present joys, or pleasures, for more constant and solid happiness ; and to endure some present pain and misery, to avoid greater ; let the Master of fleshly pleasures, and voluptuousness, as he that placed all happiness in such, tell them, that need to be told ; and let them be ashamed of their brutishness, who not regarding the authority of the Scriptures, nor the discourses of more sober Philosophers, must ow their learning to such a Master

Master. His words to that effect, are to be found in more than one; but *Diog. Laertius*, I hope, will be believed (a true disciple of his:) when others perchance of better worth, will not. *Οὐ πᾶσαν ἡδονὴν αἰρέμεθα, ἀλλ' ὅτιν ὅτε πολλὰς ἡδονὰς ὑπερβαίνομεν, ὅταν πλείον ἡμῖν τὸ δυσχερὲς ἐκ τῶν ἐπιταῶν καὶ πολλὰς ἀλγυσιόνας ἡδονῶν κρείττερας νομίζομεν, ἐπειδὴν μείζων ἡμῖν ἡδονὴ παρεκλάβη, πολλὸν χρόνον ὑπομένοντες τὰς ἀλγυσιόνας;* that is: *We do not embrace all pleasures, (bodily, you may be sure, for of mental, there needs no such caution:) but sometimes we pass by many pleasures, when the misery that attends them, doth appear greater. And so we preferre many pains before pleasures, when the pleasure that will ensue upon those pains, or sufferings, though of long continuance, will be greater. So Epicurus in Laertius. And accordingly one of his disciples, and champions in Cicero: At vero eos & accusamus, & justo odia dignissimos ducimus, qui blanditiis praesentium voluptatum delinxi, atque corrupti; quos dolores, quas molestias accepturi sint, occaecati cupiditate non provident; that is, But we both blame them, and think them most worthy of greatest hatred, who being allured, and corrupted by the baits of present pleasures; blinded with their lust, do not forecast, what pains, what miseries they shall undergo hereafter. Had these men known, think we, or believed, that there is any such thing as an Hel, or a Paradise of eternity, after this short and momentaneous life, in comparison; would they have sought after worldly pleasures, for happiness? Or what would they have judg-*

ed of those, who profess themselves Christians, and that they really believe an eternity of bliss, or misery, (according to their deeds) after this life; what could they have said of them, according to their own tenets; but that they either meerly dissembled, and lyed, in saying they believed so, and so; or that they were worse than the very brutes, and well deserve (*justo odio dignissimos*) to be abhorred of God and men. To this purpose pleads *Origen* against *Celsus*; that one chief reason, that so many continued in unbelief, was, because they could not digest, that there should be a day of judgment, which must needs, if believed, bring a great alteration in their lives: but whether his own belief in that particular, was so sound and sincere as it should have been; a question may be made by what he writes of it in that book, which no man needs to wonder at, who knows, what things were laid to his charge by Orthodox Christians, of those times, and since. But let him go.

It is certainly against all reason, and the nature of rational man to believe, that they that truly and really believe an Hell, and a Paradise (which not to believe, what is it but a direct abjuration of the Christian faith?) and keep this apprehension of either, fresh in their memory; can long continue in any scandalous sin; or indeed fall into any such, if the matter admit of any deliberation. For what may be done in a sudden passion (by such especially, who are generally passionate:) which admits of no



premeditation or deliberation, I know not; provided that such, as soon as they return to themselves, and know what they have done, shew sorrow and repentance according to the quality of the fact; and patiently submit to the punishment, whatever it be, which the Laws of the Land have provided against such offences. I speak not this to extenuate the odiousness of any such fact: but only I say, that in such facts as admit of no deliberation, (as it doth sometimes fall out:) it is not so apparent, how the faith is abjured, as in those that do; though it is very probable, that they that are true Christians indeed, and daily seek unto God, (as their faith, if true and real, doth oblige them to do:) for increase of Grace, and the favour of his protection against all temptations; God will not suffer their passions to prevail so much over them at any time, as to commit such things, which their soul otherwise doth abhor. But it may be said; it is an hard task to be a Christian, if these things must still be kept in fresh memory to prevent sin, and the guilt of *Incredulity*. And what greater argument of *Incredulity*, then for a man to think, that such a reward as Heaven and Eternity, doth not deserve daily care and meditation? and that the expectation of such a Reward, as the beatifical sight of God; should not make all cares and labours, if not sweet and easie; at least, very tolerable? what care antient Heathens did take to imprint in their memories, the Fundamentals of their Sect, reduced into certain *Aphorisms*,  
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or *Canons*, is wonderful to see, upon no other interest, many of them, but that they might not misbehave themselves in their profession. Not therefore to speak of *Hippocrates's Aphorisms*, which most Physicians of any note, learn by heart to this day; as Civilians, their *Regula juris*: *Epicurus*, that wicked man; there were but few of his followers that had not his *Κυριαὶ δόξαι*, exactly by heart. *Epictetus* his *Enchiridion*, was written by the Stoicks to that end. Besides many precepts, occurrent in their books to the same purpose, as *Anton. 11. lib. 3. 14.* As *Physicians have always, &c.* And let me add, that in my opinion, we come very short of the care and prudence of ancient Christians, who (I will not say, in imitation of Heathens, but certainly, not without some consideration of the benefit, whereof they had had experience, when Heathens, of such helps; ) were wont to collect out of the Scriptures, some choice places, against all manner of temptations, outward and inward; with such places also, as did most emphatically set out the horror of the consequence, in case of yielding; to the end, that such places might be committed to memory, and always in readiness when occasion was, whether by night or by day, in time of sickness or health. This was their practice; but little of that in any late Books of *Devotion*, (whereof the world is so full,) that I have seen, though I make no question, but it hath been ever since and is at this day, the practice of many devout Christians; private collections where judge-

ment is not wanting, having the advantage of publick, that every man may make choice of such places, which will most affect him; wherein according to variety of tempers, and capacities, great variety may be observed. But the practice however, well deserves to be recommended by them that would promote Piety; and I am confident, (and the more confident, when I remember, what benefit *St Augustine* in time of greatest need, reaped of the speech, or sentence of a *wise man*, as by the author of his life is recorded; and what benefit some others, to my knowledge have reaped of the same :) but very confident I say, that Twelve or Twenty such passages, judiciously collected, and faithfully committed to memory, may do more good, then some hundred of Sermons, which may please the ear, and affect the heart too, perchance, whilst heard; but are not (commonly; or, but by very few :) long remembered. Besides, we know whose precept and practice it was, for the love they bare unto Philosophy, and some obscure hopes of a better life, to call themselves daily before sleep to account how they had passed that day, whether according to their profession or no; what omitted, that should; or committed, that should not have been: And these we call Heathens: I do not know, if these were *Heathens*, how to think him a *Christian*, that can pass many days without calling himself to an account; and I think, when the Apostle doth exhort, *that the Sun might not go down upon our wrath*, he meant it of

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our Lust also, or any other sin, which is contrary to profession: and this to be done daily, as often as *the Sun goeth down*, and doth put, or should put us in mind of our mortality. It is no light task, I confess, daily to examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith, and continue in the fear and love of God, and our Redeemer Jesus Christ: but no hard task, certainly to them that beleieve seriously, and really, what Christ hath done for them, and what he doth expect from them; without which beleef, what are we but *reprobates*; (to use the Apostles words) and *infidels*? I would know of any man, that hath any knowledge of the world, (not to appeal to every mans own conscience, what it can tell him of himself in that kind:) what he hath observed ordinary men will do, I will not say for a *kingdom*, (though that in very truth, be but a petty thing, in comparison; yet such is the blindness of many, say Christ what he will: *what doth it profit*, &c they would not think much to quit both body and soul to the devil, directly, by agreement,, or indirectly by bloody practices; to purchase a Crown, though but for some years: *si violandum est jus*, &c. yet he was but an Heathen that said it, and therefore the more excusable: ) but what ordinary men will do for some worldly reward, they most affect, whether Wealth, Honour, Credit and Reputation; or lastly, (and well it may be last, as the most brutish, and less becoming a rational creature: ) bodily pleasure, where they have any hopes to compass it by such means; what

running and riding, waiting and watching, striving and struggling; through how many affronts, delays and disappointments, sometimes: with what courage and perseverance? But for Heaven and Eternal life, notwithstanding daily exhortations, invitations private and publick; how cold and remiss; how scrupulous and capricious: nay, plainly, disobedient, and refractory many are, what can be the reason of this difference, but that of things temporary, as things in sight, and well known, they think they have some assurance, if they live, and good luck favour them: but of things Eternal and Heavenly (for want of due consideration, and daily application to God by prayer, and otherwise, for further illumination:) they have no great certainty, or knowledge: and if any hope, yet very weak and imperfect. And what is that, but *Incredulity*; occasioned in most I confess for want of due consideration, as we said before, whereof more by and by. I shall therefore conclude not to bind any man, no further then he thinks himself bound by any Scripture evidence or determination of the Church: but as a probable opinion in point of reason and right Philosophy, not onely that all sins proceed from *incredulity*; but *incredulity*, probably, the only sin that will be laid to the charge of men professing Christianity, who live not according to their profession. Some speeches or testimonies of antient Fathers, (and the rather, because I find none in Gerard, who is so accurate otherwise; in the defence of *Luthers* opinion:) I might Produce

duce, for further confirmation, as that of *St Cyprians*, *Credere in Christum se quomodo dicit, qui non facit quod Christus facere precipit? Aut unde perveniet ad premium fidei, qui fidem non vult servare mandati?* and that of *Salvian*, *cum hec sit hominis Christiani fides, fideliter Christi mandata servare; sit absque dubio, ut nec fidem habeat, qui infidelis est, nec Christum credat, qui Christi mandata conculcat; ac per hoc totum in id revolvitur, ut qui Christiani nominis, (so printed, and may stand very well; yet because he said before, *hominis Christiani*, more probable, and more emphatical too, if it be so here also:)* *opus non agit, Christianus non esse videatur*, and the like. But my purpose was, to examine it by reason rather than authority. In general I may say, (which I think should be of great weight and authority) that heathens may rise in judgement against such pretended Christians, who, (Heathens I mean,) would not allow them to have believed the being, or existence of any Gods, really; whose lives had been defiled with any notorious crime, as *Sacrilege*. *Perjury*, and the like. *Quid de Sacrilegis, quid de impiis, perjuriisque dicemus; si putassent esse Deos, (sacrilegi) perjuri, aut tam impii fuissent?* so one of them in *Tully*. What Religion I pray, were those late Saints, who made no scruple at all to rob God and Churches; and rather a matter of boasting, then of shame and ignominy.

But here, as I conceive, it will be very proper, and give some light to what hath been said



of the effects of *Incredulity* hitherto, to consider of the causes, the most natural (if I may so speak of a thing so unnatural, if it proceed to right down Atheisme :) and intrinsic, of *incredulity*, in, and of things Spiritual and Eternal.

That, man doth consist generally of two parts, Body and Soul, is the common beleef, I think of all men; though disputed, and denied by many; some being for the body, and what depends on it, to be man purely, and essentially; others, for the soul only. Of the first opinion are all those, who will not have the soul of man to be immortal, and a distinct Essence from the body, but an effect, or meer product of the body only. Of the second, were antiently the Platonists and stoick Philosophers, who stoutly maintained, and thereupon grounded most part of their Philosophy, that the body was no essential part of man, but a meer vessel, or Organ of the *Soul* (many words and similitudes they used to that effect) which was the true man, and that onely. I will not insist upon the reasons of either side, which would be a long work. But to decide the matter, by the rule of truth, that is, the Scriptures; the first opinion (though I deny not but somewhat, even out of them, might be said and argued to afford them some talk or countenance, that would gladly have it so :) yet upon due consideration will appear abominable, and equally destructive both to the Scriptures, and to all Religion. The second, though of it self not impious, yet not defensible

defensible by the Scriptures, which own the body, though not so considerable, or indeed in comparison, not considerable; yet of it self a part, subject to the soul; and this especially in the business of the Resurrection; for otherwise, some places might be found, which might be thought very much to favour the opinion, and to have given occasion (which must be understood of the Scriptures of the Old Testament) to the Platonists, or whoever were the first assertors of it. Admitting therefore, that man doth consist of two parts: no wonder if the worst part, especially since the soul, or reasonable part, hath received such a foil by the fall of *Adam*; have great influence upon the man; upon some more, upon some less, naturally; as their temper (*de meliore, vel sequiore luto:*) happens to be more gross, or more refined. To such a disadvantageous temper, if suitable education, and instruction; and a course of life, fixed in the contemplation of secondary causes, and meer nature, be added; the whole frame will be in danger of being infected, and swayed by the gross earthly part, and opinions, bred accordingly, not easie (but by the power of God, and a great degree of illumination) to be removed. As this; that nothing is truly existent, which is not corporeal, and may not be seen with bodily eyes, and touched with hands of flesh: which it seems in *Plato's* time, was the opinion of many, who had the boldness to own it publicly, and defend it as well as they could; and hath been, certainly, the opinion of many  
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in all ages, as the inducements have been, more or less; though the publick profession of it, not allowed and tolerated in all ages and places, equally. But let us hear *Plato*, how he speaks of it: Ἀθρε δὴ πεισοκοπῶν, μὲ τις τῶν ἀμνησίων ἐπικύη; εἴσι δὲ ἔτι, οἱ ἔδ' ἐν ἄλλοι οἰόμενοι εἶναι, ἢ ἔαν δύνωνται ἀπρὶξ τῶν χειρῶν λαβεῖν. περὶ δὲ, καὶ γένεσις, καὶ πᾶν τὸ ἀόρατον, ἔκ' ἀποδεχόμενοι, ὡς ἐν ἑστέας μύροι: in his *Theætetus*. Look about, saith he, lest any prophane man hear: Them, I mean, who think nothing to be (really,) which they cannot hold fast with their hands. As for actions and generations, and whatsoever is not visible, they allow no such thing to have real existence: or, to have any part of essence in them; or, to be reckoned among essential beings. But more fully, and peremptorily, in his *Sophist*. οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἐξ ἑρᾶν καὶ ἀόρατα πάντα ἔλκυσσι, &c. There be, saith he there, who bring down from heaven, and that invisible (world) all things to the earth, simply embracing rocks, and trees, and taking hold of them, and the like, averre with all confidence, that such things only as may be touched, and handled, are truly existent; defining a body, and essence to be the same thing; (that is, that nothing hath essence which hath not a body.) What these men expressed by feeling, and handling; others expressed by sight, and eyes, professing they would not believe any thing to be, truly and really; which could not be seen: nay *Cicero* saith, which they had not seen with their eyes: which made him say; *An quicquam tam puerile dici potest, &c.* that is, Can any thing be more childish, than



than to deny the being of those kinds of beasts (or animals) which are proper to the Red sea, or to the Indies? Whereas it is certain that the most curious that are, with all diligence they can use, can never come to the knowledge of all those creatures which live in the earth, or sea; in lakes, or pools, and rivers: all which we may as well deny to be, because we have never seen them. This brutish Opinion he doth in the same book charge Epicurus with, particularly; out of his own books; the arrantest brute, we may truly say of him (his Sentences excepted; which he studied of purpose, to draw and delude people;) that ever took upon him the name of a Philosopher, that I say not, of a man. But in the first of Plato's passages, there be some words, which some may stick at, (I did, I am sure, and do still:) to which, if not for Plato's sake, yet for the sake of those ancients (as Theodoret by name for one) that quote the same out of Plato, I will endeavour to give some light. What doth Plato mean by actions, and generations, which he reckons among invisible things? What may be said of works of darkness, I cannot tell: but good actions may be seen, certainly; else our Saviour had not said, *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good deeds, &c.* And for generations, so much had not been written of them by those that have written *de Animalibus*, (Aristotle, and others;) had they been altogether unknown; and invisible. By Πράξεις, Plato doth understand, as I conceive, virtues, or laudable actions. For one objection against those  
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sots, who denyed the real being of any thing, that was not palpable, and visible; or indeed corporeal: (for that is it they aimed at) was, what account they made of vertues, which had no bodies? The objection was pertinent enough, the end of that brutish tenet, in denying the real being of spiritual invisible beings, being chiefly to confound all moral Philosophy, and mortality among men; and to turn (as much as can be) men, naturally rational, into very brutes; (*Epicuri de grege porcos.*) Now those of that Sect, that would deal roundly and simply, they made no scruple to acknowledge, they believed all *vertues* were but fancies, and fictions; bare words, nothing of truth, or reality. So did *Epicurus*, as doth appear by a passage of his, by *Cicero*, (not without protestation of his true, and ingenuous dealing, and challenging any man living to contradict him, if he could:) produced out of some of his most serious books, where he spake, as he thought: where having delivered himself what he understood by *voluptas*, or pleasure; to wit, *saporem, & corporum complexum, & ludos atque cantus, & formas eas, quibus oculi jucundè moveantur* &c. he goes on; *sapè quæsi ex iis qui sapientes appellantur; quid haberent, quod in bonis relinquerent, si illa detraxissent; n si vellent voces inanes fundere. Nihil ab his* (nothing that did satisfy him, being so far metamorphosed into an hog, already :) *potui cognoscere: qui si, (nisi, as I take it,) virtutes ebullire* (I find not this word used, but by *Epicurus*, or of *Epicurus*; which shew-

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eth what account he made of *virtue*: his word, as I take it, might be, *ἀποφύειν* or *ἐπιζέειν* :) *volent, & sapientias; nihil aliud dicent, nisi eam viam, qua efficiuntur eæ voluptates, quas supra dixi.* But others, of the same opinion otherwise, that nothing was really existent, but what was corporeal; but not so impudent yet, as to deny openly the reality of *virtues*, (which denied, it will follow, that *virtue* and *vice* are all one; which is that *Epicurus* would have :) they were driven to this ridiculous assertion, that *virtues were animals*, and had bodies: a thing almost incredible, but that we have *Plato's* direct attestation of it in the same place; and that *Seneca* hath written a whole Epistle of this subject, *An virtutes sint animalia*; which he doth utterly disclaim, as extremely ridiculous, and doth much blame those of his Profession, who did busie themselves about such fooleries. So much for *Πράξεις*, or *actions*. Now for *γένεσις*, or *generations*; (the more difficult of the two) I conceive he doth intend the miraculous invisible power of God in *generations*; comprehending *nutrition, auctior, and the like*; so much admired, as by the holy Psalmist, (*Psal.* 8: according to the common interpretation, though not altogether followed by me, in my *Annot.* upon the place :) and *Psal.* 139. (as all men understand him;) so also by the wisest Philosophers, excellently set out, by that admirable, both Emperour, and Philosopher, *Aurelius Antoninus*, in the 10th of his *Divine Meditations*, St. 26. *From man is the seed, &c.* the



the reader will not think the time lost, that reads the whole passage in him. I think we can have no better Interpreter of *Plato's* meaning by that word. For the end of that Paragraph, is, to teach, that God, though invisible to bodily eyes; yet by the effects of his power upon man, in *generations*, &c. we may see him as plainly and certainly, as we see and discern (in Mechanical Engines, made for that purpose, for example :) the cause of the elevation, or depression of any weight. Hence it is, that God Almighty, among other titles and names, is also from this word *γένεσις*, called *γεννησιουργός*, that is, the *Author*, or *Operator* of *generations*: as by the *Author* of *Wisdom* (among the *Apocrypha*) in that memorable passage (alluded, not improbably by *St. Paul*: τὰ γὰρ ἀόρατα, &c.) ἐκ τῶν μεγέθους καὶ πολλοῦ κτισμάτων ἀναλόγως ὁ γεννησιουργὸς αὐτῶν θεωρεῖται. Now that they who are so grossely conceited, as that they cannot conceive any thing to be really, that is not corporeal, are generally Atheists, I think will easily be granted: Yet that all such are professed, or real Atheists, I will not say. There have been, through meer simplicity, some *Anthropomorphites*, who conceived God, (and if God, then all things certainly) to be *corporeal*; who yet lived not like Atheists, but in the fear of God, and in all other things, good Christians. But generally, that it is so, as we have said, and that the abettors of Atheism promote the opinion, as much as they can, that nothing is truly existent, but what is corporeal, needs no farther proof.

Hence

Hence it is, that they that deny, or will not believe any *supernatural operations*, by witches and magicians, are generally observed to be Atheists, or well affected that way. To pass by the judgements of many late writers of best account, which are obvious : *Origen*, against *Celsus*, is very peremptory in the point. For having spoken of miraculous things, done by witchcraft. and the power of Devils ; as also of true miracles, by the power of God ; καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ὅτιν (saith he) ἐκ τῆς ἀκολουθίας ἡ τοι ἀμφότερα ἀναγεῖν, καὶ λέγειν μηδέτερον γίνεσθαι ἢ τιθέντα τὸ ἕτερον, καὶ μάλιστα, τὸ χεῖρον, ὁμολογεῖν καὶ αὐτὸ κρείττονος. He doth not absolutely say, if there be true miracles, there must be false also ; no, but that the belief of the one, doth commonly go with the belief of the other ; and that if there be false miracles, that is, *supernatural operations*, by the power of Devils ; there must of necessity be true miracles also, by the power of God. Certainly, it is a point of excellent use, to convince *incredulity*, to know certainly, that there be witches and magicians ; as elsewhere hath been more largely insisted by me, (of *Credulity*, and *Incredulity*, in things natural :) and the consideration of the Devils power, in those wonderful effects we call *supernatural operations*, if well proved and attested ; must needs be of great weight (next to the immediate operation of Gods Spirit, without which all perswasions and evidences are inefficacious) with a rational man, to lead him to the acknowledgement of a Deity ;  
and

and consequently, the probability of most articles of the Christian faith. Yet, that none are true Christians in their hearts, but such as acknowledge witches and magicians, and what is commonly believed of them; (more than the *Scripture* obliges them to believe, which indeed tells as much of them, for the strangeness of the stories, as is to be found in any well attested relations) far be it from me to say. More likely it is, that the abundance of impostures and delusions, which are incidental to this subject, and through the *credulity* of simple people, pass in many places for true stories; have wrought many, though otherwise good Christians, to this kind of *incredulity*, that all, in this kind, is but imposture, and juggling: who might easily be convicted, and converted, if they would but consider, that such is the condition of all humane things, to be lyable to imposture; not any thing therefore to be rejected, by wise men, upon that ground, barely; and withal take time to peruse the relations of men, of whose faithfulness, and ability to judge, there is no probable ground of suspicion. Which they that refuse to do, and yet keep stiffly to their opinion; I must confess, they give just ground of suspicion, that they are afraid of being too manifestly convicted, that there is a God; a just Omnipotent God; and consequently, that the Christian faith may have more truth in it, than they desire it should have, or are willing to believe. But I will not repeat; it hath been my business elsewhere, already.

This



This had been written long before, (for I have had much sickness since; even to extremity, for a time) when a little book was brought me from one of the Booksellers Shops in this City, intitled, *The question of witchcraft debated; or, a discourse against their opinion, that affirm witches. London 1669.* I had soon run it over; and finding nothing, though the opinion it self fiercely charged with *heathenism, and idolatry*; yet nothing that concerned the account by me given about it; or those grounds; which most men I think, who believe witches and witchcraft, build upon; and by consequence, neither the cause it self, much, if at all, (if men look into it seriously;) concerned; I had no thought to have taken notice of it. But since that, understanding by a learned friend, who is much conversant in *London*, and well acquainted with all manner of books; that this *Discourse* was in no little esteem, among some: I changed my opinion, and thought it would be expected from me, upon such an occasion; by those, at least, who knew, that I had seen the book. And I am the more willing, because the matter, as I conceive, to the good satisfaction of any rational, indifferent man; may be dispatched, in few words. All therefore that he saith to prove, that there be no witches, if I be not mistaken; may be reduced to these four heads. First, no mention is made of *witches*, or *witchcraft*, in the Scripture. 2. They are simple, ignorant, foolish people, all, or most, that believe any such

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thing. 3. It is very derogatory to God, and his Omnipotencie, to believe such. Fourthly, and lastly; The belief is chiefly groundd upon, partly fables, and partly policie. All very pertinent, and material points, or heads, I confess: but so proved, that if the author had really intended to testifie unto all men, what a desperate cause he had uundertaken; and deterre as many as pretend to ordinary sense and reason, from adhering to it; I know not, (I speak it from my heart, as becomes my years, and present condition;) what could be written more effectually. But I have no reason to expect the reader should be of my judgment, but as his own reason shall guide him.

I., First then for the Scriptures; that the word *witch*, and *witchcraft*, doth often occur in our Translation, he denies not: but our Translation he peremptorily determines is *false*, and *erroneous*. What, ours, the English only? Nay. all Translations I think, that ever were: besides the Chaldee Paraphrasts, and other Oriental Translations; so the *Vulgar Latin*, *Fagius*, *Paguin*, *Vatablus*, *Iunius* and *Tremellius*, *Ainsworth*, &c. *maleficus*, *magus*, *prestigiator*, &c. which last, perchance, may be thought ambiguous; but that they that use it, explain themselves, how they understand it; as *Iunius* and *Tremellius* doe, upon *Exod. 22. 18*. Neither, if the word be interpreted by some, of one that holdeth the eyes, and seemeth to do that which he doth not; is this to be understood of any

any others, than right *witches*; by some called *fascinator*s. For whether the thing be done *really*, or made to appear to the eyes *visibly*; not by flight of hands, but by real appearance, it matters not, as long as it is done by the same power, the power of the Devil. As for example; if a man shall represent, in the sight of a whole town, or as many as a publick Stage would hold; a horse mounting up into the air, by degrees, and afterwards vanishing; as *Wierius*, of a noted Sorcerer, at *Magdeburg*, doth relate: or if another shall, to sight, loosen the rings of a gold chain, that hanged at a noble mans neck, and make them come to him, who stood at a distance; and then make them walk back again, and to fasten, as before: which to have been done before *Charles* the ninth King of *France*, is attested by more than one: whether these things were done *really*, or represented to the eyes, as things *real*; and so apprehended by so many spectators; though there be more, perchance, in the *reality* of the thing, than in the *appearance*, or delusion of so many eyes; yet that neither is done without *witchcraft*, will be granted, I suppose. And so will allow the Hebrew word, to import properly, as some think, *a delusion of the eyes*; but such delusion as is wrought by *witchcraft*, and *fascination*; not by flight of hands. Besides ordinary Jewish Expositors, and all learned Authors of Dictionaries, as *Paguin*, *Buxtorfius*, &c. the very circumstances (in most places) would evince it. Would not a man in reason expect, that he



would have given some reason of his dissent? No; *αὐτὸς ἔφα*, must serve the turn. But give a man that liberty, to impose interpretations upon words, at his pleasure; how easie were it to transform the Bible, without any alteration of words, into the Alcoran; or the Alcoran into the Bible? But the Lxx. render it (*: αὐτὸς* that is the word in question:) by *φασμακός*; meaning an impostor, not a poysoner. For it is ridiculous to think, that Pharaohs Magicians, &c. did exercise the art of poysoning, saith he. But who doth use the word *φασμακός*; for an Impostor? Not any ancient Author that I know of. A poysoner indeed it doth signifie, we grant: which hath given occasion to some very learned men, but not so well versed in the Greek, as in other learning; to mistake, as though the Lxx. had intended *veneficum*, by that word. I say, *veneficum*, properly taken, for a poysoner: for otherwise it is as often taken, in best Authors, for a *Magician*, or *Sorcerer*. But why should we be told of a poysoner here; (though it be so taken sometimes:) after it hath been by them; that have written of *witchcraft*, more than one; by so many pregnant passages (which admit of no evasion) out of *Hippocrates*, *Plato*, *Dioscorides*, *Aristophanes*, *Theocritus*, *Galen*, &c. so copiously proved, that *φασμακός*, or *φασμακεύς*, is most commonly taken for a *Sorcerer*; and *φασμακεία*, for *witchcraft*; what shall we say? If a man will say, and confidently affirm, that *lapis*, in Latin, doth properly signifie *bread*; and *panis*, a stone; and expects he shall be believed, without

without any further proof, because of his confidence ; what may we think of him ; or of them rather, that believe him ? Upon this ground, in so great a business ; our Author builds, and doth peremptorily resolve, and pronounce it, in more than one place, that of *witches*, or *witchcraft*, the Scripture is altogether silent. There be other Scripture words too, which to the same end he doth interpret at his will : but, this being the chiefest, I shall not stand to examine them. But he hath, in case this should not satisfie ; (but certainly, yield but to him his interpretations, which he doth impose upon words, are right, because he doth say so, and will have it so ; and he might have spared the trouble of further arguments : ) two or three arguments more, to prove that a *witch*, as taken now a dayes, hath no foundation at all in Scripture ; or that, a *witch* is not to be found in Scripture. The first is ; *whom our translatours call Witches, but the Kings, and Queens, and Princes of the earth : as also the Priests, and Philosophers, and wise men of this world : whereas the witches, now a dayes, are poor, silly, contemptible people, &c.* Sure the Scriptures, as expressed by our Translators, mention many others as witches, who never were Kings, nor Queens, &c. But indeed, amongst the rest, some Kings, and Queens, we grant ; and if you will, add *Priests, Philosophers, and Wise-men*. For *Kings, and Queens, and Princes of the earth* ; there is no necessity at all, that we should thereupon infer, that themselves, personally, did execute, or pra-

&ise that wicked art. If they did imploy, and entertain witches and magicians, known unto them for such; as they did incurr the guilt thereby, certainly; so the *title* might as deservedly stick unto them. But our Author will say, we hear of none such in our dayes. I doubt he is no better an Historian, than he hath shewn himself a Linguist. For I could tell him from good Historians; and other sufficient witnesses, of Kings, Queens, and Princes Courts, which (not many ages ago neither:) have swarmed with creatures of that damnable profession: And that the Kingdom of *France*, (time was, not many ages ago:) through the indulgence of Magistrates, who were willing to believe there were no such creatures in the world, as true witches, and forcerers; hath so abounded with them, as is almost incredible to relate; but that the witnesses are such as may be credited. Hath he never read of *Julian the Apostate*, in former times; in whose time all *Philosophers*, besides *Priests* of his Religion; were accounted witches, and forcerers; (whereof we have a good account from histories of those dayes:) and himself, personally, a great practitioner, amongst others? Hath he never read of any Popes, that ever were witches, or forcerers? sure we are, we read of such in Histories, written in those dayes by men otherwise zealous enough for the Popish Profession.

Another argument is taken from the Sadduces, a famous Sect among the *Jewes* who denied  
*Spirits,*



*Spirits*, &c. yet had the five books of Moses in highest esteem and regard. Whereupon it is referred, that either they did not understand Hebrew; or if they did, the notion of witchcraft did not appear in Moses: for else, how could they be said to deny *spirits*, if witches had been mentioned, or acknowledged by Moses, who deal altogether by Devils and *Spirits*? This, though not expressed, must not of necessity be supplied, if you will make any thing of the inference. And if not in Moses; he supposeth, it will be granted of the rest of the Bible easily enough. Now certainly, how any man that knows what belongs to sense, or reason; should thus argue, I cannot imagine; except he did it on purpose, to make himself sport, and to try to the utmost, how far the simplicity, and credulity of ignorant people will go. How, do we think, such a man doth laugh in his sleeve, when he hears himself commended? For doth not the same Scripture, that tells him the Sadduces believed no *Spirit*, tell him also, that they believed no *Angel*? And is not mention of *Angels* often expressly made in the Books of Moses? If therefore the Sadduces found no *witches* in Moses, who deal with *Spirits*, because themselves believed no *Spirits*; what shall we say of *Angels*, so often, and so expressly mentioned?

The third, and last argument is, from their different practises: our modern witches practise, is a secret, occult art; but those whom our Translators called *witches* in the Bible, were

such as practised what they did, openly, and in the face of the world, &c. But how doth he prove this, which to believe, is so much against all reason, and probability; that I say not, against the clear text of the Scripture it self? Is there not an exprefs law, repeated more than once, that **מכשפ** (whether we translate *miracle-monger*, as he would have it; or *witch*, and *sorcerer*, as all, or most translations; is not at all material in this particular :) should be put to death? And the number of them that transgressed against that law, (as by the context doth appear :) being not small; can any man believe that they would profess it openly; or that they were all *Kings and Queens*, and such as the law could take no hold of? But it is, as all the rest: **αὐτὸς ἔφα**: he hath said it: all *wise men* will think themselves bound to believe him.

II. His next general head is; none but silly, simple people, &c. I would ask; would a man undertake such a work, to prove there be no witches; that had never read any, who are of a contrary opinion? The general consent, I confess, of all men, in all ages, in all places, excluding the multitude, or ordinary people, hath been used, and may yet, for ought I know, as an argument; but that which most men, (next to the authority of the Scriptures) most ground upon this question, is, the authority of those men, who of all men, may probably and rationally be supposed to have been best able to judge; and that is, *Naturalists*, and *Physicians*,  
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the most eminent of that profession : whose interest also obliging them to believe, that there be no *witches*, nor *sorcerers*, able to act such things, as are commonly ascribed unto them ; rather than to believe it : may probably and rationally be supposed not to have been partial in their relations, and acknowledgements, against their own interest, and credit of their profession : which, we know, made *Galen* so long to stand out, as himself professeth ; till at last, daily experience, and evidences, forced him to acknowledge the force of *spells*, and *charms*. To this end plentiful testimonies are commonly produced, of *Naturalists*, and *Physicians* of this learned age ; (men of eminent worth, and integrity too, some of them ; ) who profess to have been present, and eye witnesses ; sometimes one, sometimes more than one at once ; when such, and such things have been done in the sight of many others, by known *witches* and *sorcerers*. And amongst other particulars ; such and such cures done with bare *spells*, and *charms* ; (and sometimes, besides *charms*, with the application of things, which might be thought ridiculous, and improper otherwise ; ) which by themselves were thought impossible, or altogether supernatural. Many such instances, they that are better provided, may find in my *Treatise of Credulity, and Incredulity, in things natural, &c.* lately set out. So that what our Author doth declaim against the simpleness, and credulity of ordinary people ; against the cunning and juggling of others ; except he can  
tell



tell us, where those *wise men* live, that can see further into the truth of such things, than such learned *Naturalists*, and *Physicians* we have spoken of; (not to mention *Law-makers*, of greatest fame; and lawful Magistrates, of all Kingdoms, generally; all whom to condemn for silly Idiots, or wilful murderers, is somewhat an hard judgment :) comes to nothing.

III. Another general head is, that it is derogatory to God, and his *Omnipotency*, and, as it were, the setting up of so many Gods, if *Witches*, and *Sorcerers*, who can such and such things, be believed. But they have but a mean apprehension of Gods power, and *omnipotency*, who can think so; especially, when it is granted on all sides, that the Devil, by whom such creatures act, can do nothing to the prejudice of man, woman, or child; no, nor of their goods, or cattle; without Gods permission: so that, let Devils, or Witches abound never so much in a place, they that put their trust in God may live secure, that nothing shall happen unto them, without Gods will, and especial providence: which is the comfort of every good Christian. But I would know what our Author doth think of what happened to *Job*, as recorded in the Scripture: we find there, that God left him to the Devils power in all things, excepting his life. Whereupon, what strange things happened, who doth not know that is not a stranger to the book? Yet I will not press precisely, and literally; *the fire of God; or, a great fire, from heaven,*

heaven; and, contrary winds, which beat upon the four corners of the house; which might be aggravations of the Devil himself, (according to the interpretation of some ancient Fathers, and Writers, who make the Messengers in the text, to have been so many devils in the shape of men,) to terrifie Job the more. But what shall we say to those bands of Sabians, or Chaldeans, which were so soon raised by the Devil, by some kind of sudden inspiration, or enthusiasm? which I think a far greater miracle, or wonder (well thought upon :) than the greatest things that are reported done by ordinary Witches and Sorcerers. Except there also, with some Greek Interpreters, we understand no others, than bands of Devils, in the shape of men; as before : which perchance will not much abate of the miracle, in common estimation; though it doth in mine, much. That the Devil had a commission from God, to raise thunder, and lightning, and tempests, to afflict Job with; as not able, God permitting, to do it by his own power; I know not who sayes, besides our Author; and it seems very repugnant to the context, and contrary to the opinion of best Expositors. Yet, *propria autoritate*, (that is, when, and where he will;) that he can any thing, no sober man will say : as the Council of Bracara (the first held there,) determines it, against the Priscillianists, who maintained two Principles, or Gods; the one, the Author of all good; the other, of all evil; of equal power. But besides; those things that have been reported done by  
Witches

*Witches* and *Magicians*, have been thought so certain, so manifest, so publick (some of them) and undeniable; that even they that have denyed the real being of *Witches*; have yet, most of them, acknowledged the truth of those things. *Anberius* was a learned Physitian; and will not grant there is any such thing, as *Witches*, and *Sorcerers*: yet that such and such things are really done, which are commonly ascribed to *Witches*, and *Sorcerers*, he doth grant; nay, think it little better than *madness*, for any man to deny such approved experience. His opinion was, that men and women did those things, not by a compact with the Devil, or by the Devils power; but by the virtue of a strong *faith*. The like may be said of *Pomponatius*, a late Philosopher and Naturalist, in great esteem with some men. Though he deny *Witches* and *Sorcerers* to be really; (as he, who denyed Devils and Spirits:) yet he denyeth not the truth of those things, commonly ascribed unto them; as I remember; (for indeed I have not his books at this time:) but doth ascribe them to some other cause. *Wierius*, another learned man, and Physitian, hath written much, (and done much hurt, it is generally thought:) to prove that there be no *Witches*: but that those things commonly ascribed to *Witches*, are truly and really done by the Devil, he doth not deny: and indeed doth tell as strange stories of *Sorcerers*, or *Men witches*, whom he doth grant to act by the Devil; as any I have read: but such was his respect to the weaker sex, he could not be



be brought to believe any woman so malicious, or so cruel. Many Arab Philosophers, of great fame for their learning in the world, did not believe there were any such creatures, as *Witches* and *Sorcerers*, who acted by Devils, and Spirits; yet, that such things were done, as caused such admiration in the world, they did not deny: their opinion was, such things might be done by the bare strength of *Imagination*: which hath much affinity with his *Anubius* opinion, spoken of before. Now whether, after all this, our Authors αὐτὸς ἔφα, here also, without any further reason, must serve the turn; I leave it to the judicious reader to consider.

And now, after so much said concerning those three general heads; the reader, I hope, will not expect that I shall, or need trouble my self to answer (whether first, or last, in his book :) the fourth, and last general head, that the opinion of *Witches* took its beginning from *Heathen Fables*, or *Papal Impostures*, and the like. Yet one particular more I will take notice of before I have done; wherein he doth make some shew of a Scholar, and a man of some learning: but whether he doth acquit himself, as a Gentleman, (which I hear he is) in it, I shall leave to others to judge. He tells us of a *Decree of a Council*; the *Council of Ancyra*; more ancient than the *Nicene Council*; wherein they declare to all *Christians*, the *heathenishness* of this belief, and opinion; to wit, that there be really in the world such things, as *Witches*, and *Sorcerers*.

Sorcerers. The words of the Decree are many; and in very deed seem to import some such thing; (though directly intended against such, who had forsaken the faith of Christ, and worshipped *Heathenish Deities*;) neither is our Author the first that made use of those words to that end. But whereas he tells us, that *Martin Delrio*, the Jesuite, is in this point *so ingenious*, (*ingenuous* he meant, I believe) *as to dissent from Baronius*, who doth not acknowledge this to be a *Decree*; (for that there was such a Council, as the Council of *Ancyra*, no man ever doubted) of that ancient Council; I think he should have told his Reader, that *Delrio* doth speak very doubtfully; *magis inclinatur animus, donec certiora habeamus, &c.* till more certainty, he doth rather incline to adjudge it to the Council of *Ancyra*: but what? All that our Author hath printed under the title of that *Decree*? No, by no means; no part of it, if I understand him, as I think I do. The whole *Decree*, as exhibited by *Gratian*, *Causa 26. q. 5.* doth begin; *Episcopi, eorumque ministri, &c.* and ends, *infidelis est, & Pagano Deterior*. From the beginning to those words, (where *fortilega* and *magica ars*, that is, *Witchcraft*, is condemned, as an invention of the Devil; and therefore of purpose omitted by our Author, as I conceive, because they make against him,) to those words I say, *& ideo a tali peste mundari debet sancta Ecclesia*: *Delrio* doth say, *hoc tantum reor, &c.* that so much he doth believe to belong to the Council of *Ancyra*. But for the rest,

rest, where the *Decree* exhibited by our Author, *Illud etiam non est omittendum, &c.* doth begin; *reliqua, non arbitror esse Concilii illius*: he doth not believe to be of the same: and truly, in my opinion, he doth give good reasons why it should not: For that in those *Collections*, different pieces, of different times, and Authors, are sometimes patcht up together, is sure enough, and acknowledged by all men. What our Author doth aim at, when he tells us for a *remarkable thing*, that in the *Rescript* of *Diocletian*, and *Maximilian*, to *Julianus, Malefici*, (that is, *Witches*;) and *Manichai*, are joyned; I know not. If I understand it, I think it supposes *Witches* and *Sorcerers* to be very really; which is not that he that would have. But I have done

Now this, the not believing the real existence of incorporeal essences, whether through dullness, or coarseness of brain; or long accustomedness to earthly objects, and contemplation of nature, and natural causes, where no ground, or foundation is laid to sanctifie such enquiries; this not believing I say, the real existence of incorporeal essences, is the most immediate, and intrinsic, as I conceive, cause of Atheism, or *Incredulity, in things divine*. There be other more remote causes; I will consider of some of them. But before I come to that, to prevent all mistake in the former dispute, I must tell them that know it not, that there is some ambiguity in the word *body*, as used by some ancients: For by *body*, some understand whatsoever hath  
any



any kind of composition, or materiality : or indeed, whatsoever is not *ens simplicissimum* ; and that is, God. In that sense *St. Augustine*, who otherwise doth profess to believe, that the soul is *incorporeal* ; doth yield it to be *corpus* : and so *Devils*, and *Angels*, are not *incorporei*.

Another great cause of Atheism (I now take Atheism, as opposed to Christianity chiefly) is, a wicked life, or corrupted manners. For if a man, by custome, be once engaged, or enthralled into any great and mortal sin, as *adultery*, *fornication*, *extortion*, and the like ; he is very ready to hearken to such opinions, as may make him secure in his sin, and take away all terrors of conscience : as, that there is no God, no Providence, no Hell, no Paradise, no judgment after this life ; and the like. And where a man by the leudness, or wickedness of his life ; or by a strange natural inclination (of his natural temper I mean ;) or by bad education, is once engaged, to wish it so, though otherwise a man of good judgement, in other things ; yet he is soon drawn by his affections to believe that true, which he wishes to be so ; all books of Philosophers being full of warnings to that end ; and all Historians, of examples, how easily the judgement, though never so well informed, is swayed, and corrupted by strong passions, and affections. No wonder therefore, if ancient Philosophers did appoint, and prescribe divers kinds of purgations, (the chiefest, an absolute indifferency to all worldly things :) to them, who proposed

to themselves, as the main business of their lives, the pursuit of truth. This also is very well set out by the same *Origen*. *Celsus* objected, the Christian faith received the most wicked in the world. This *Origen*, upon due repentance, and purpose of amendment, and a new life; doth not deny, absolutely: But let any man, saith he, make an impartial survey of Christians; he shall not find so many converted from so wicked a life, as he will of them that lived more civilly: whereof he gives this reason, because they that lived orderly and civilly before, were very ready to entertain such a religion, as promised such excellent rewards to vertue, or a vertuous life: whereas others, lewd and riotous livers, could not (ordinarily) endure to hear, as of a new life, their profession would oblige them to lead in this world; so, neither of those punishments, in another world, their Christian faith would oblige them to believe, if they continued in their wicked courses. There is so much evidence of reason in this, that it doth need no farther proof. *Plato* hath a divine passage to this purpose, wherewith I think the civil reader will be well pleased: ἐν γὰρ τῷ σώματι, καὶ λύπη, ὥσπερ ἦλον ἔχουσα, προσηλοῖ τὴν ψυχὴν πρὸς τὸ σῶμα, καὶ προσπρονᾷ, καὶ ποιεῖ σωματικὴν εὐδαιμονίαν, ὥσπερ ἂν καὶ τὸ σῶμα εἴη. Every pleasure, or grief, saith he, hath a nail in it, as it were, wherewith it doth nail the soul, and fasten (Gr. clasp, or buckle) it to the body, and makes it corporeal, (or, doth attemperate it to the body) so that it shall receive that for truth, whatsoever the body (or bodily interest) shall insinuate, or commend.

A third, I find in *Plato*, which also deserves consideration. He calls it *μισολογία*, *hatred of the word*, that is, of those exhortations to virtue, and a moral life, which were made by Philosophers of those times; some of which, (as *Socrates*) preached the rewards to good and bad in another life, though upon no great certainty, yet with no small confidence; and were believed by many. But he makes *μισανθρωπία* (that is, *an hatred of men*) to be a kind of forerunner of *μισολογία*, and both to proceed from the same cause, in a manner. For saith he, when a man, who dealt simply and ingeniously with others, and had great confidence, judging of them by himself, in their honesty; and finds himself once, first; then a second, and third time deceived; he begins then to think, that all men are knaves, and cheaters, and as such he hates them (and a great chance if he do not, though *Plato* doth not express it; think it his part to follow their example) and thinks it a piece of folly and simplicity, to expect any honesty in the world. So saith he, when a man for want of due consideration doth entertain for a truth, what he finds afterwards to be false; and so again, and again; he begins at last to believe that there is no such thing as truth in the world, and that it is nothing but cheating and cozenage, and so becomes a right Infidel to all truth, and all persuasions. Out of all question, put these together; what he doth assign to be the cause of *μισανθρωπία*, and *μισολογία*; and we



we have the true cause of that *Incredulity*, in matters of faith, which doth possess many. For he, who is once perswaded, that all men are (generally) knaves and dissemblers; or, that there is no honesty in men, nor certain truth of any thing in the world; how can he be but an absolute Infidel himself? yea of the worst kind of Infidels, grounding upon that, beyond which no infidelity can go; such an uncharitable opinion of men, as may probably proceed to, if not a professed, yet to an inward hatred and detestation. I make a question, whether such an uncharitable conceit be the cause of infidelity, or infidelity rather the cause of it. The *World* indeed is a great juggler; as an ancient learned man, when I was a young man in *Oxford*, was wont to say: upon every occasion of discourse he would fall upon that. I never was in his company (a man full of good and serious discourse otherwise) but he had it up more than once. But he that judges so of all men, because he hath found it so in some, is no better than a professed Infidel, and certainly enough hath abjured Christianity in his heart. Yet on the other side, to expect absolute perfection, in the best that are, may argue some simplicity and ignorance of the nature of man; which may prove a dangerous ignorance. Let it be the glory of God, that he only is good, and that no man is so good, but stands in need of his mercy. He may say, there is none good, no not one; but charity obliges us to think the best of all men: and if we cannot think all men good, yet we may think them

(if we will be led with his spirit, who said, of whom I am chief,) in some respect or other, for the measure of grace God hath vouchsafed them, better than we are.

I will enquire into no more causes: not because there be no more, for indeed the most ordinary, wherof mention is made in the Scripture, more then once, (as *Prov.* 1. 32. *For the turning away of the simple, &c.* and *Ecclesiastes* 8. 11. *Because sentence against an evil work, &c.* and elsewhere,) that is, the prosperity of wicked men, and the afflictions of the just and godly in this life, is omitted. The truth is, it hath been so thoroughly Canvased, not by Christians only, but by antient Philosophers, that have written of Providence; that I thought it better to let it alone, then to handle it slightly. Other causes also might be found, but the chiefest have been spoken of.

But whereas some men, (very many I doubt, in these, as well as in the days of *Plato*,) do not think any thing really existent; that is not *corporeal*, what if it be true, that nothing hath true being but what is *incorporeal*, and eternal? that this was *Plato's* opinion every body knows, that hath read any thing of him. But I must add, he hath said so much to prove it true, that I know not almost, how it can be contradicted, if weight of reason must determine it. The very name of God יהוה in the Scripture, being an expression of his Essence, as it differs from

from all created beings, may seem to import some such thing: and on the Gates of *Apollo's* Temple in *Delphi*, was, amongst other things, engraven ΕΙ: ΤΗΟΥ ΑΡΤ. Which was understood as spoken to God, and of God; as to him, to whom only *true being* doth belong, and as an acknowledgement of the vanity, sickness, unstableness of all worldly visible beings; which being in a perpetual flux, and course of alteration could not properly (so they thought, it seems:) be said any time, *to be*, because never fixed, and immutable. So is the word and purpose of it, expounded by *Plutarch*, in a peculiar Treatise of this very subject. I cannot forbear some of his words, but in his own language, would do much better. *We say to God, Thou art; saith he; which compellation of being doth truly and really belong to him onely, and no other so properly as that. For we men in very deed, have no share in true being, because every mortal nature, between the state of generation, and corruption, can afford but a very obscure and uncertain appearance, or representation of it self: (or, of its nature:) He hath many other words in the very next page to this purpose. Whether the word יתן did not originally lead these Philosophers into these high conceits; let every man think as he pleases. Whether also the title of living be not ascribed so often in the Scriptures to God, in opposition to that life that created beings live; or, whether in opposition to Idols only, I shall not stand to enquire, nor in what sense God only is said to have immortality,*



by *St. Paul*. *Plato's* opinion is well expressed by *Seneca* in few words; *Quaecunque videmus & tangimus, &c.* that is: whatever it is that we see or touch, *Plato* doth not reckon among those things, which he thinks really to be; for they flow, and by continual diminution, and addition, subsist only. And again; All these things which serve the senses (or, are the objects of the senses :) which do inflame and allure us, *Plato* doth deny to be of the number of those things which really are. *Epist.* 58. *St. Paul* might aim at some such thing, when he said: For the things which are seen, are temporal: (so we have it; but *temporaria*, temporary; or, but for a while; *προςκαιρος*: much better, I think :) but the things which are not seen, are eternal: And wise *Solomon*, when he denied riches to have a being, because they fly away (or we from them :) so some, *Prov.* 23. 5. This I think made *St. Augustine* to say, as before was intimated; *Platonica familia Philosophos, facillime omnium, paucisque mutatis, fieri posse Christianos* How well this will agree with the Philosophy of these dayes, I know not, by which all profitable knowledge is reduced to experiments, and natural Philosophy: very ill, I doubt: but that is not our business.

For Conclusion of this whole Discourse, (and sure I am it is time I should end; which may be true in more than one sense; and they that know my condition, will wonder, perchance, that I should find so much free time :) I will end in the commendation of that, which all this while

while I have impugned ; and that is, *incredulity*. Yet I shall not be inconstant to my self : For though I can give it no other name, neither do I find any other name given unto it, than *Incredulity* ; yet it is another kind of *Incredulity*, very different from the former, as an effect of true faith, and so proper to true faith, as I conceive ; that I shall somewhat doubt the soundness of their faith, (of *speculative* men I speak it : for I do not make it a general case, extending to all tempers equally :) who have not had some experience of this kind of *Incredulity*. We may call it, according to the Schooles, and upon *Thomas Aquinas*, if I mistake not his warrant, *Incredulity*, or *dubitatio admirationis* ; which is, as described by my self elsewhere ; when a man by satisfactory proofs or evidences, being fully convicted in his understanding, that the thing is so indeed ; is nevertheless, not only by the greatness and sublimity of the things themselves, that are proposed ; but also by the consideration of the meanness of man, concerned in those things, so confounded and amazed, as that at the same time, he neither knows how to believe, nor yet can tell how to contradict. *Plato* to this purpose, very expressly, in these words : ἀλλὰ μὲν (ἦν δ' ὁ Ζίμμιας) ἐξ αὐτοῦ ἔχω ἔτι ὅτι ἀπὸ αὐτοῦ, ἐκ γὰρ τῶν λεγομένων &c. that is : Truly (said *Simmius*,) by what I have heard from you, I cannot doubt of the truth of those things, that have been said : Yet when I consider the greatness (or sublimity) of the things, and mans weakness, and contemptibleness, I am forced (within my self)

self) to suspend my belief to farther consideration. Their discourse had been about the immortality of the soul, and the rewards of piety and godliness, after this life. I have a book of Devotion, (*Enchiridion piarum precatationum*, &c.) of Martin Luther his composing, set out Wittenbergia, 1560. which I value much, were it but for that veneration of the Lords Prayer, which he doth profess in more than one place; and acknowledgement of the benefits he had reaped from the constant, and devout use of it; now that it hath suffered so much persecution, (and doth yet, it seems; God mend the times:) from the pretended Zealots, and the fanatick crew. But in this book, among other things, there is an Homily entituled, *de Fraternitativibus*; or, relation of Brotherhood, that all true Christians have to Christ; upon those words of Christ to Mary Magdalene, after his resurrection; Touch me not, but go to my brethren, and say unto them; I ascend unto my Father, and your Father: and to my God, and your God: John 20. 17. A very pious Homily it is, and sets out the greatness of Gods love, and the happiness of a faithful Christian, as such a thing can be set out with humane words, at which the Angels of heaven stand amazed. The impossibility of a perfect faith in this great mystery, while we live, he doth often declare, and as I conceive, proves sufficiently. I shall set down here some of his words: *Et quis etiamnum id credere, sibi que plane persuadere potest? Ego quidem, &c.* And who is it that can believe, and fully persuade himself,



himself that it is so? as for me, it is my earnest endeavor, and the very sum of all my wishes, that I may believe it: but my heart is too narrow to contain (or, comprehend) it, and to trust it self with such fulness, and certainty of assent, to the verity of those words, as it ought. For indeed, had we gone so far, that we should not doubt at all; we should have attained to our happiness in this world, so that we should not dread either death, or the devil, or any worldly Cross at all; but our hearts would be in a state of constant exultation and ravisment, and could think of nothing else but the praises of God. So again, a little after, *Quamobrem ut maxime sentiam & experiar, me non posse plena fiducia & toto corde, &c.* Much more he hath to the same purpose in that Homily; and I find these words of the same Author, and to the same purpose, but out of another Book or Treatise; quoted by more than one, with good approbation; *Homo perfecte credens se esse heredem & filium Dei, non diu superstes maneret, sed statim immodico gaudio absorberetur.* Which for my part, whatever any man may think of it, I think to be very true, and agreeable to the nature of man and of faith also; such a faith, I mean, which by long and intent meditation, many, if not most pious Christians attain unto whilst they live. But I say again; it must be understood of such, who either by nature, or by study, or both; are in some degree *speculative*: which all are not, and yet may be good Christians, if they shew the power of faith in their lives and conver-

conversations, God forbid, we should doubt it. *Luthers* opinion in this particular, may be the more considerable, because he was a man of an Heroick spirit, and as zealous a Champion for the power of faith, as any that I know. *Pet. Chrysologus* upon those words of the Gospel; *And whilst they yet believed not for joy, and wondred: Fratres, saith he, Discipulos ad ista tardos, stupidos ad tanta, non perfidia timor, (that is; incredulus timor:)* *sed causa praeiitit magnitudo: visa non videre; nescire, seita; credita, non credere; non incredulitas facit sed miraculum singulare.* Here be two things mentioned, either of them very capable to make a man not beleeve his own eyes; and, in the possession of true faith, to be incredulous. First, when that which is wrought, is so great and miraculous, that we are affected with stupour at the sight, or thought of it, as *Chrysostome* doth profess of himself; he could never think of the body of Christ exalted to the highest Heavens, and worshipped by Angels and Archangels, but he was ravished with admiration, and even beside himself. And Secondly, when our concernment in the miracle is as great, as the miracle it self, is strange and wonderful. For that to be the effect of excessive joy, or hope to make a man not to beleeve, what he doth beleeve, and doth even see with his eyes; is observed by many. *Nescio nisi quia tam misere hoc esse cupio verum; eo verear magis;* well expressed by the Comick: and generally, that unexpected accidents are sometimes so amazing,

as to make men not beleieve their own eyes; *Polybins* hath a pregnant example in his viii Book, where among others, those words will be found *ταυμάζοντες ὅτι τὸ γέγονε, ἥπισαν τοῖς ὁσωνείοις*, that is, *they were so possessed with admiration of that had happended, that their eyes could not make faith to them that it was true.* Now if it be so, that the greatness, (as to the consequence:) and *incredibleness* (as to the means that are used) of worldly things, can be so amazing sometimes; as to make a man not beleieve what he seeth for a time: Lord, how many things eternal, brought about by such *incredible* incomprehensible means affect them that beleieve them truly and really? for they that beleieve them but coldly; no wonder, if they feel no such thing, or in a mean degree. The more vigorous a mans faith is, the more strong his *Incredulity*, in this kind is like to be. God be merciful to all that strive and endeavor against it, as *Luther* doth profess of himself, and advise others. But reason I think, will oblige any man that seriously doth consider of it, to think that whoever thinks any thing in the world, much considerable, in comparison of those mighty things of our faith; or whoever thinks any thing in the world to deserve much admiration, besides this, is far from that apprehension of it (still excepting those that are not of a capacity:) that is requisite to such a measure of faith, as may justly pretend to the reward of true Christianity, and if they find no *incredulity* at all, in their faith at no time; I shall not much applaud



plaud their happiness in it, but leave it to themselves, to examine themselves according to the Apostles advice : which if they refuse, or think necessary ; I think this very neglect may save them the labor of farther examination, to know themselves.

But to them that find it in themselves, as *Luther*, and many others have found ; or who labour of a worse kind of *Incredulity* ; besides earnest assiduous prayers, and other good means mentioned by him and others ; it may perchance be of some effect, if they call to mind, on such occasions ; what either themselves have known to happen to themselves or others, which they would have thought most *incredible*, and almost impossible ; or what they have observed of that nature, in the account of former times, in credible Authors. I think there are but few, if they heed it, ( which should be done, I think, by all men : ) but might find somewhat in the course and passages of their own lives to this purpose : but History may furnish them, I make no question. It may help them, who naturally find themselves prone ( as some are naturally more than others : ) to *Incredulity*. I will instance in one example, that I may be better understood. Was there not a time when a man went about from kingdom to kingdom, promising with no small confidence, if he might have help ; to discover a new world ? if he did not say a *new world* ; yet a great *Continent*, he said, and that this *Continent* is already acknowledged

ledged (by some late writers I am sure:) as large as any two parts of the world, we know: what it will be when better known, time will shew. But I desire I may be allow'd to make him to speak, what proved afterward very true, though he knew not so much then: It will serve my purpose better, so; and the truth will not suffer by it; well then: a man goes up and down, telling people, and making offer to great Princes, if they will help him; he will find out a *New World*, never known to these parts: a World well stored with Inhabitants, divided into several Kingdoms; great Towns, great Citys to be found in it; abounding with Gold, so that what Iron is among us for ordinary use and occasions; as of Carts and Waggon and Household employments; there Gold is. That when they have found it, they shall return in ships ballasted with Gold instead of stones or sand. That there, great Pearls and precious Jewels, shall be brought them in great Boulds or Baskets, which they may purchase; the whole Bould perchance, for a small matter; though he did not use those very words, yet it is certain he did talk much of great wealth, and abundance of Gold to be found there; as of Pearls and Jewels also, plentifully; for which talk he became ridiculous to Princes, and a common Table-talk among Courtiers, as if he had been some fabulous Knight of the Sun, or, *Don Quixot*; which did much trouble him. *Toto pane septennio exacto, vorandis repulsis, anlicis risui esse capit, quasi inania meditaretur, ut pens nullius foret, capit pe-*  
tito

titio ejus ( ut ipse testatur, in suis Commentariis )  
 in fabellam verti & convivii subservire ; qua  
 res illum supra modum sollicitum habuit, saith my  
 Author ; as good I think, as any that have writ-  
 ten of that subject: the Title of the Book is,  
*Augmentum Ptolomei, &c. Lovanii, in fol. 1598.*  
*Peter Martyr*, of approved authority among all  
 men in those things ; doth tell of one such *Bowl*  
 or *Basket*, that weighed, if I mistake him not,  
 above an 100 pounds, allowing Eight Ounces  
 to every pound ; which was purchased with  
 Glass, Bracelets, Looking-glasses, and Bells, and  
 one iron Hatchet. He tells there also, writing  
 to Pope *Leo* the X. that his *Predecessor* ( *Paul*  
 the Second, as I conceive ) for one Pearl out of  
 such a *Bowl* or *Basket*, paid to a kinsman of his,  
 Forty four thousand Ducats for it. But here I  
 must confess, I am somewhat at a stand, whe-  
 ther I understand him a right, because of those  
 words, *in oriente* ; which seem to import, that  
 it came from the *East*. Yet if that were not one  
 of them ; he doth mention another, which  
 certainly came out of the said *Basket*, purcha-  
 sed as was said before ; which could not be much  
 less worth, if not more, as he doth intimate, by  
 what it yielded soon after, in that Pearl Coun-  
 trey. The Author before-mentioned (who  
 wrote *Augment. Ptolem.*) tells of one *Dr.*  
*Gonsales Ximenius*, who out of one Rock, car-  
 ried away One thousand eight hundred ( *ingen-  
 tes Smaragdos :* ) great *Emeralds* ; whereby he  
 did purchase to himself ( *( ingentes divitias, &  
 nominis & Lavitatem )* ) vast wealth, and not less  
 renown



renown. And as for Gold, all relations tell us of such incredible plenty they got at several times, ( besides the King of *Spain* his share always reserved, and set apart : ) that what I have said, may be thought as nothing in comparison. Suppose then, that *Columbus* in his Petitions, had insisted on such particulars, before the truth of them was approved by experience ; what he would have been thought of, we may easily know ; for though he did not say so much, nor could, ( though most true, if he had : ) yet what he said of a great *Continent*, &c. was laughed at, and had it not been more for his friends sake and the credit he had gotten by former services, then any great opinion those that employed him, had of his success, *America* might have been unknown to this day. Now, if upon earth, such things have been seen, when no man expected or beleaved any such thing ; or thought it possible : why may not we beleave, I go now but upon grounds of possibility, only to satisfy them, who cannot fancy such high and mighty things, as our faith doth oblige us to beleave, can be true ; not so much for want of Faith, as for want of a larger soul, ( then mortal man is ordinarily capable of : ) that Heaven may afford much more strange and *incredible* things, though for their sublimity, hardly *credible*, or imaginable to man ? Now if a man, because he cannot fancy such high things for the present ; shall therefore, instead of striving against it, by prayers, and other good means ; give way to *Incredulity*, and find his error, when it is too late

late, what will his case and confusion be then? this would be thought of sometimes, ( while it is time : ) if men can spare so much time from the pursuit of those things, which have an appearance of *great things* in this world, and under that notion, entice and allure many; but will then appear, toys and fooleries, and Childrens baubles; even the most specious, ( if abstracted from thoughts of Eternity : ) that go under that name: But I have done.

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*FINIS.*

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